Rasen
(Spiral)

Story by Sakura Mizuki

Based upon the novel by
Suzuki Koji

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Rasen
3

spiral

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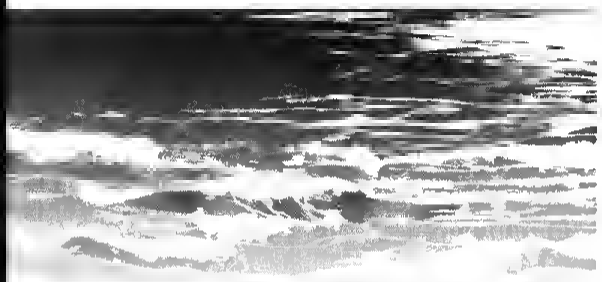
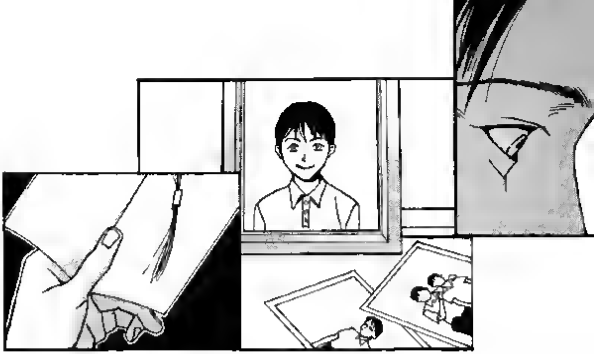
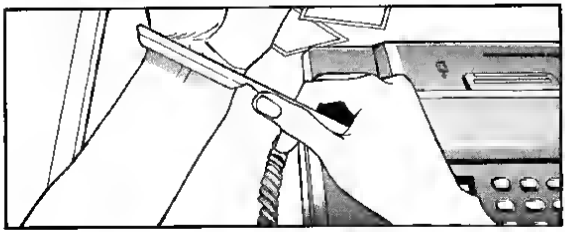




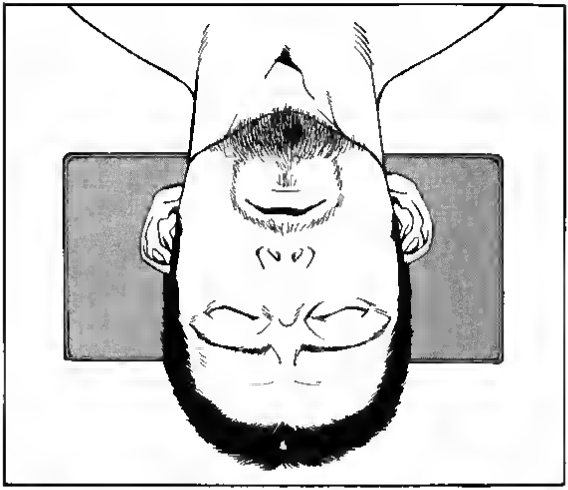
BRRRRING



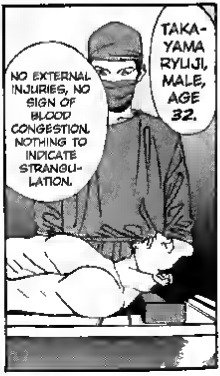
BRRRRING BRRRRING

HELLO
HELLO ?
YEAH. I GOT IT.
YEAH, WHATEVER YOU WANT.
LET'S JUST GET THIS OVER WITH.
NOT EVEN DOING THIS... IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT WON'T BRING MY SON BACK TO ME.
DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

AND THE ANSWER?
GOT IT! IT'S A KEY. A CODE SEQUENCE.
GIVE ME A MINUTE! I'M ALMOST THERE...
WHAT DO YOU SAY, ANDOU? READY TO GIVE UP?
DEAD END
Takayama Ryuji
RYUJI...



SUDDEN DEATH SYN-DROME?


TAKA-YAMA RYUJI, MALE, AGE 32.
NO EXTERNAL INJURIES, NO SIGN OF BLOOD CONGESTION. NOTHING TO INDICATE STRANGU-LATION.

DOCTOR! HIS NECK..
YOU'VE LOST WEIGHT, HAVEN'T YOU? RYUJI..
LOOKS LIKE SOME SORT OF TUMOR. LET'S GET A TISSUE SAMPLE.
HEART: 312 GRAMS
CAUSE OF DEATH WOULD APPEAR TO BE HEART ATTACK BROUGHT ABOUT BY BLOCKAGE OF THE LEFT CORONARY ARTERY

THUMP
THUMP
EH?
AAH
!

DOC TOR?
WHAT ?
178
136
IT CAN'T BE ...
IT LOOKS LIKE. NEWS- PAPER IN HIS STOM- ACH?!
MORE CODE- PLAY, RYUJI? EVEN NOW?

SO DOCTOR, WHAT'S YOUR RULING ON THE CAUSE OF DEATH? TURN UP ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS?
LIKEWISE.
DR. ANDOU? I'M INSPECTOR MAEKAWA. PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

WELL, WHY NOT ASK THE PERSON WHO FOUND THE BODY FOR YOURSELF? HER NAME IS TAKANO MAI. SHE'S A UNIVERSITY STUDENT, AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE WAS DEEPLY IN LOVE WITH THE LATE PROFESSOR. GUESS IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT THE TWO WERE LOVERS...
FUNNY?
AH. A FUNNY THING, THAT.
WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, MR. MAEKAWA, THE TIME OF DEATH THAT YOU PROVIDED WAS INCREDIBLY ACCURATE. HOW DID YOU...?

MS. TAKANO?

THE PATHOLOGIST IN CHARGE OF THIS CASE.
TAKANO MAI, MEET DR. ANDOU MITSUO.
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MR. ANDOU.
MY NAME IS ANDOU. I WAS A FRIEND OF RYUJI'S FROM UNIVERSITY.
.....
WELL, IT WAS JUST LUCK, REALLY ...
HE SAID THAT YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE THAT COULD EVER BREAK HIS CODES.
EH?
PROFESSOR TAKAYAMA MENTIONED YOU ON OCCASION, ABOUT THE CODE GAMES YOU TWO USED TO PLAY WHEN YOU WERE STUDENTS.

IF I CHECK THE CLOCK, I CAN USUALLY TELL WHO'S CALLING ME BY THE TIME THAT THEY CALL.
I THINK IT WAS A LITTLE AFTER 9 30 WHEN THE PHONE RANG, IT'S A HABIT OF MINE.
MS. TAKANO, WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FOR US AGAIN THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO YOUR DISCOVERY OF THE BODY?
THE MORE IT STARTED TO BOTHER ME.
THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT,
BUT THEN IT OCCURRED TO ME, THAT THE VOICE SOUNDED A LOT LIKE PROFESSOR TAKAYAMA'S.
AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A STRANGE PRANK CALL.
AAAARRGH!!

I TRIED CALLING THE PROFESSOR AT HOME, BUT NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I CALLED IT WAS ALWAYS BUSY.
SO I DECIDED TO GO TO HIS APART-MENT AND CHECK ON HIM MYSELF
THE DOOR WASN'T LOCKED?
...I HAVE A SPARE.
ガチャ
PRO FES SOR?
PRO-FESS-OR?

CHEST PAINS, LOSS OF ENERGY ?
DID RYUJI EVER MENTION TO YOU ANY PROBLEMS WITH HIS HEALTH?
AND THE CALL TO 911 WAS MADE BY YOU?
IS THAT SO...

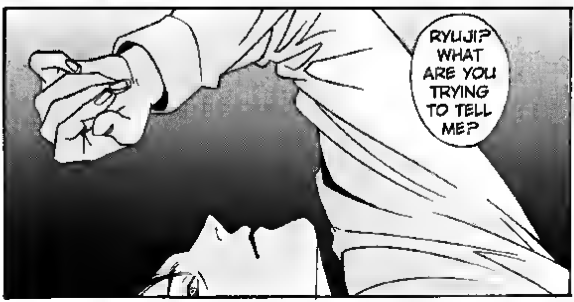
IT CAN'T BE...
DEAD END
178
136
IF A IS ZERO, ASSIGNING A LETTER TO EACH NUMBER WOULD GET..
178
136
B H / R O G
PUT THEM TOGETHER, PAIRING UP NUMBERS SO THAT NO VALUE IS HIGHER THAN 26, THE NUMBER OF LETTERS IN THE ALPHABET, AND THEN WE HAVE...
WHAT IF THE TWO LINES WERE SPLIT?

17	8	1	3	6
R	I	B	D	G

1	7	8	13	6
B	H	I	N	G

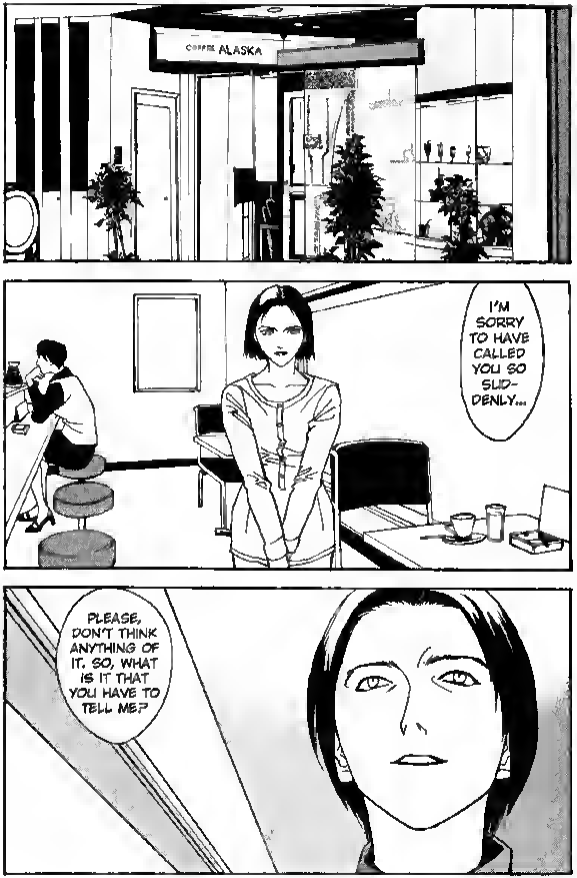
17	8	13	6
R	I	N	G

IN ENGLISH IT CAN MEAN CIRCLE, OR AS A VERB, TO CALL OR TO SOUND.



MEANING ?
THAT RYUJI HE WAS AN ODD ONE ALRIGHT, RIGHT UP TO THE WAY HE DIED.
YOU KNOW PROFESSOR SEKI, DON'T YOU?
Dept of Pathology
MIYASHITA, HAVE YOU GOTTEN ANYTHING BACK ON THE TISSUE SAMPLE WE TOOK FROM RYUJI?
JUST TELL ME, ALREADY.
HE TOOK ONE LOOK AT THE TUMOR WE PULLED FROM RYUJI'S PHARYNX, AND YOU KNOW WHAT THE OLD BUZZARD SAID?
THAT OLD MAN. HE SAYS SOME MIGHTY STRANGE THINGS SOMETIMES.

THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT.
PROB-ABLY NOT STILL..
SMALL-POX?
HE SAID IT LOOKED LIKE SMALL-POX.
I THINK I'D LIKE YOU TO CHECK WITH SOME OF THE OTHER UNI-VERSITIES, SEE IF THEY'VE TURNED UP ANYTHING AS WELL.
HMMM... IF YOU CAN SPARE THE TIME.
PUTTING ASIDE THE LOGISTICS OF IT FOR A MINUTE, IF THE TUMOR *WERE* VIRAL IN ORIGIN, IT'D STAND TO REASON THAT OTHERS HAVE BEEN INFECTED AS WELL.
I'M ON IT. IT'D PROB-ABLY BE A GOOD IDEA TO BEGIN BY LOOKING FOR OTHER CORPSES EXHIBITING THE SAME SYMP-TOMS. HERE'S HOPING THIS THING DOESN'T TURN INTO A FULL-BLOWN EPI-DEMIC.


CAFÉ ALASKA
I'M SORRY TO HAVE CALLED YOU SO SUDDENLY...
PLEASE, DON'T THINK ANYTHING OF IT. SO, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU HAVE TO TELL ME?

IT'S ABOUT PROFESSOR TAKAYAMA. THE WAY THAT HE DIED. THERE'S SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN BOTHERING ME.
THE NIGHT OF HIS WAKE, THERE WAS A PHONE CALL FROM ONE OF HIS FRIENDS FROM HIGH SCHOOL. HE SAID HIS NAME WAS ASAKAWA.
ABOUT A VIDEOTAPE?
WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT THE PROFESSOR HAD DIED, IT WAS LIKE HE WAS IN SHOCK. HE TOLD ME THAT HE'D BE RIGHT OVER, AND A FEW MINUTES
LATER HE SHOWED UP LOOKING ALL FRANTIC. HE WAS ALMOST SHOUTING AT ME, GOING--
A VIDEOTAPE?
ARE YOU SURE THAT RYUJI DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOU? FOR EXAMPLE,
I THOUGHT IT WAS STRANGE, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW WHY HE'D BE ASKING ME ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT

PROFES-SOR... THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE AS YOU LAY DEAD...
I KNEW THAT HE AND THE PROFES-SOR WERE WORKING TOGETHER ON SOMETHING. MAYBE IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE VIDEO-TAPE HE WAS ASKING ABOUT.
ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI.
I'M AFRAID THE ONLY THING I CAN TELL YOU IS HIS NAME-- ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI.
DO YOU KNOW HOW I COULD GET IN TOUCH WITH THIS ASAKAWA?
THAT SOME-THING ON IT WAS SO SHOCKING THAT HE COULD HAVE DIED OF FRIGHT?
DOCTOR, WHAT I WANTED TO ASK YOU WAS: DO YOU THINK THAT THIS VIDEOTAPE COULD HAVE KILLED THE PROFESSOR?

DID OF FRIGHT? OUR RYUJI?
MS. TAKANO, DO YOU THINK WE COULD MEET AGAIN SOMETIME? THAT WAY, I COULD GIVE YOU MORE INFORMATION AS WE HAVE IT, ABOUT RYUJI.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

SHIT.

Your Horoscope
YOU SAID YOU'VE MADE SOME PROGRESS ON THE RYUJI CASE.
FIRST, YOU HAVE GOT TO CALM YOURSELF.
DID YOU FIND A VIRUS AFTER ALL?
SIX?!
ALL EXHIBITING THE SAME SYMPTOMS AS OUR FRIEND THE PROFESSOR.
SIX MORE BODIES HAVE TURNED UP...

THEY ALL THOUGHT *THEY* WERE THE ONLY ONES TURNING UP THESE KINDS OF SYMPTOMS.
TWO AT S UNIVERSITY, ANOTHER AT T, THREE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF YOKOHAMA. THE PATHOLOGISTS WERE AS SURPRISED AS WE WERE.

Takeyama Koji
Ozeki Youko
Yagi Youko
Isaka Shuuichi
Imai Takehiko
Asakawa Chiruka
Asakawa Youko
!
HMPH. JESUS ...
THERE'S MORE. IT LOOKS LIKE FOUR OF THE VICTIMS DIED AT ALMOST THE EXACT SAME TIME, AND *ALL* OF THEM FROM OBSTRUCTION OF THE CORONARY ARTERY!

ASA-KAWA ...

TOKYO— On October 21st. at around noon, a large, commercial truck collided with a passenger car on Capitol Gulf Expressway, just before the Oi exit. The driver, Asakawa Kazuyuki sustained serious injuries. His wife Shizuka and daughter Youko did not survive.

AT FIRST THEY THOUGHT THE DEATHS WERE A RESULT OF THE COLLISION, BUT A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION FOUND NONE OF THE INJURIES TO EITHER THE WIFE OR DAUGHTER TO BE THE CAUSE OF DEATH.
WHY IS THIS AUTOPSY BEING HANDLED JUDICIALLY?
A MORE DETAILED EXAMINATION WAS CARRIED OUT, AND YOU KNOW WHAT THEY FOUND?
AND ASAKAWA WAS DRIVING AROUND WITH TWO BODIES IN THE BACK SEAT?
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT THE WIFE AND CHILD WERE ALREADY DEAD
ALL INJURIES WERE SUSTAINED POST-MORTEM. LOOKS LIKE IT'S YOUR DOMAIN FROM HERE ON OUT.

HIS INJURIES AREN'T LIFE-THREATENING, NO, BUT HE'S IN A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF SHOCK.
THEY TELL ME HE'S BEEN PRETTY MUCH OUT OF IT SINCE THE ACCIDENT
AND WHERE IS HE NOW?
STILL HOSPITALIZED
IS IT SERIOUS?
WHAT?
ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI WAS A CLOSE FRIEND OF TAKAYAMA RYUJI.
THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE.
.....
LOOKS LIKE OUR LITTLE VIRUS THEORY JUST STOPPED BEING A THEORY.
ASEN CHAPTER 2
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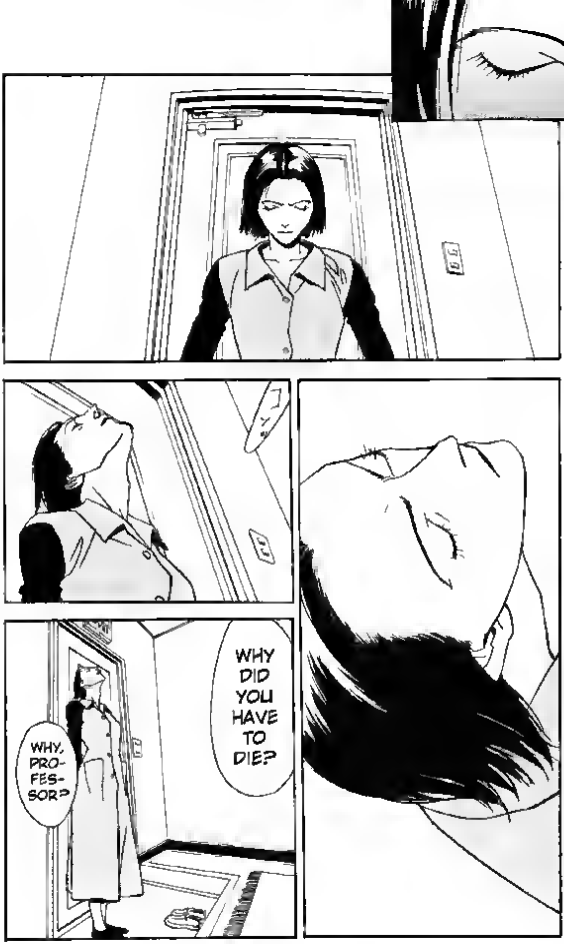
MIHARU

I'M SORRY...

AAAAAAAH!
WHY?!

AAAAAARGHHH!!!
PROFESSOR TAKAYAMA?

PROFES-
SOR...?


WHY DID YOU HAVE TO DIE?
WHY, PRO-FES-SOR?

ARE YOU SURE THAT RYUJI DIDN'T SAY ANY-THING TO YOU? ABOUT A VIDEO-TAPE, FOR EXAMPLE?
VIDEOTAPE?

Takano Ma
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URGH

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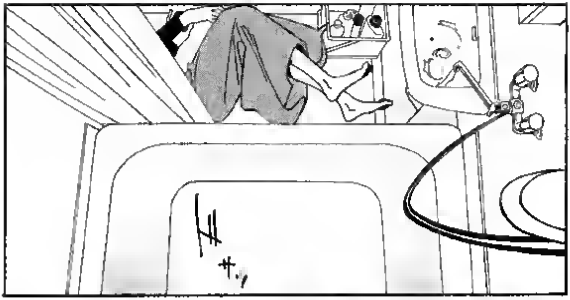
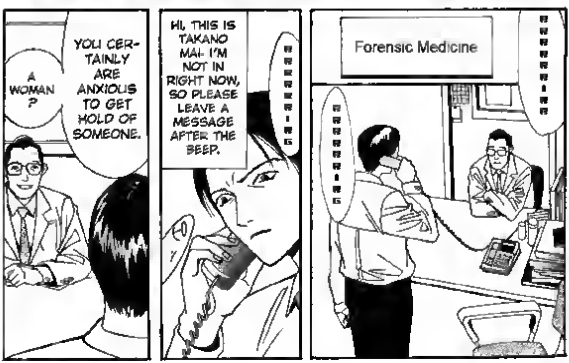



A WOMAN ?
YOU CERTAINLY ARE ANXIOUS TO GET HOLD OF SOMEONE.
HI, THIS IS TAKANO MAI- I'M NOT IN RIGHT NOW, SO PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP.
Forensic Medicine

BRRR
HELLO ?!
WELL, WELL.
...YEAH.
Yoshino Kenzou
M Newspaper
Yokosuka Branch
SPEAKING.
YES, HELLO. I'M LOOKING FOR AN INSTRUCTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC MEDICINE, LAST NAME "ANDOU."

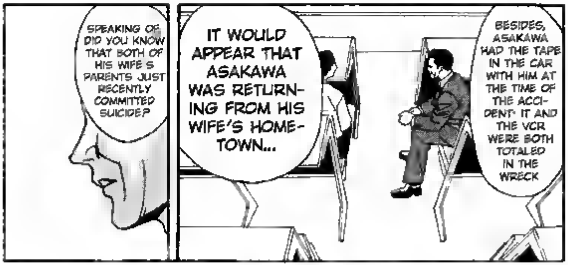
YOSHINO, M NEWSPAPER. THANKS FOR MEETING WITH ME.
WHAT CAN I HELP YOU WITH?
THE CHAIN THAT INCLUDES TAKAYAMA RYUJI, OISHI TOMOKO, TSUJI YOUKO, IWATA SHUUICHI, NOMI TAKEHIKO, AND LEADS TO..
A SERIES OF...?
WELL MR. ANDOU, I'M GOING TO COME RIGHT TO THE POINT. I'D LIKE TO GET YOUR OPINION ON A SERIES OF RECENT DEATHS.

ASAKAWA AND RYUJI WERE WORKING ON SOMETHING TOGETHER. NOW RYUJI, ASAKAWA'S WIFE, AND HIS DAUGHTER ARE ALL DEAD.
HE WAS?
ASAKAWA WAS MY UNDER-STUDY.
THE WIFE AND DAUGH-TER OF ASAKA-WA KAZU-YUKI.
WHEN I HEARD THAT YOU'D BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF RYUJI'S AUTOPSY, I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING THAT YOU SHOULD SEE.
WHAT'S THIS?

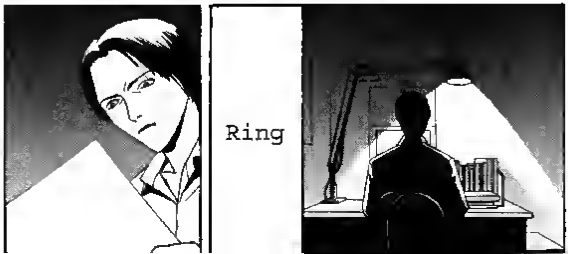
Ring
THE PRINT-OUT OF A FILE SAVED ON ASAKAWA'S WORD PROCESSOR.
IT'S A COMPLETE RECORD OF WHAT HE AND RYUJI WERE WORKING ON.
PLEASE, TAKE IT.
THE CONTENTS OF THE REPORT ARE, I FANTASTICAL TO SAY THE LEAST, BUT WHAT IT HAS TO SAY IS WORTH THE READ
I'D BE VERY INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINION OF IT, COMING FROM A SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND AS YOU DO.
RING!

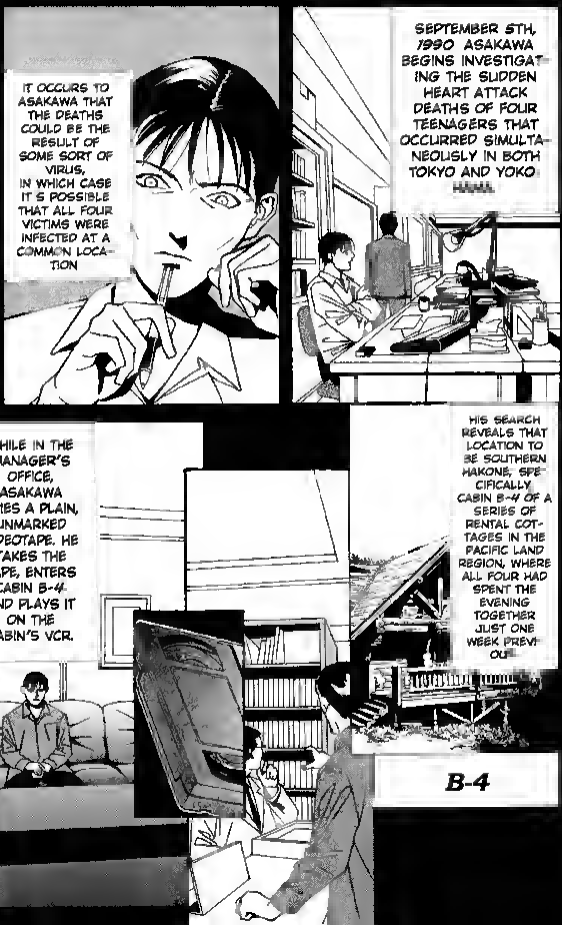
A CURSED VIDEO-TAPE THAT SEVEN DAYS LATER KILLS ANYONE WHO'S WATCHED IT.
IT CON-CERNS A VID-EO-TAPE-
COME ON.
ASAKAWA HIMSELF WATCHED THE TAPE, AND HE'S STILL ALIVE. AM I CORRECT?
"FROM THE SOURCE," AS IT WERE.
I'VE GOT MY OWN SUSPI-CIONS ABOUT THAT.
I WENT TO GO SEE ASAKAWA IN THE HOSPI-TAL, TO TRY TO GET MORE INFORMATION

HAVE YOU SEEN THE TAPE AS WELL, MR. YOSHINO?
LET'S JUST SAY THAT HIS PRESENT CONDITION HAS LEFT HIM LESS THAN TALKATIVE.
ARE YOU KIDDING?
IF I HAD, YOU'D PROBABLY'VE ALREADY AUTOPSIED ME BY NOW.


SPEAKING OF, DID YOU KNOW THAT BOTH OF HIS WIFE'S PARENTS JUST RECENTLY COMMITTED SUICIDE?
IT WOULD APPEAR THAT ASAKAWA WAS RETURNING FROM HIS WIFE'S HOMETOWN...
BESIDES, ASAKAWA HAD THE TAPE IN THE CAR WITH HIM AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT. IT AND THE VCR WERE BOTH TOTALED IN THE WRECK

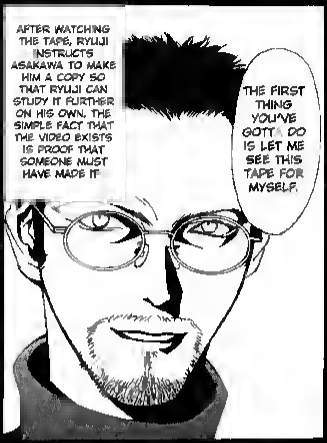
MORE THAN A LITTLE STRANGE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
THEY LEFT A NOTE BEHIND. IT SAID, "DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE VIDEOTAPE. I'VE TAKEN CARE OF EVERYTHING."


Ring

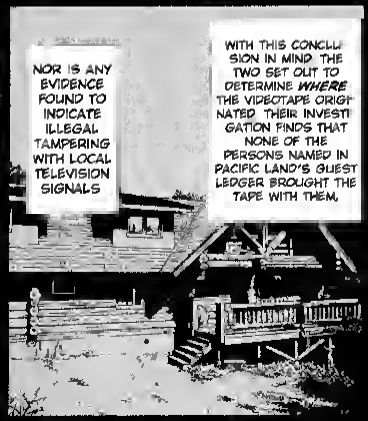

IT OCCURS TO ASAKAWA THAT THE DEATHS COULD BE THE RESULT OF SOME SORT OF VIRUS, IN WHICH CASE IT'S POSSIBLE THAT ALL FOUR VICTIMS WERE INFECTED AT A COMMON LOCATION
SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1990 ASAKAWA BEGINS INVESTIGATING THE SUDDEN HEART ATTACK DEATHS OF FOUR TEENAGERS THAT OCCURRED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN BOTH TOKYO AND YOKOHAMA.
WHILE IN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE, ASAKAWA SPIES A PLAIN, UNMARKED VIDEOTAPE. HE TAKES THE TAPE, ENTERS CABIN B-4 AND PLAYS IT ON THE CABIN'S VCR.
HIS SEARCH REVEALS THAT LOCATION TO BE SOUTHERN HAKONE, SPECIFICALLY CABIN B-4 OF A SERIES OF RENTAL COTTAGES IN THE PACIFIC LAND REGION, WHERE ALL FOUR HAD SPENT THE EVENING TOGETHER JUST ONE WEEK PREVIOU
B-4

SHOUMON BAKKARI BOUKON GA KURU ZO

You who have watched this video will die in one week. If you wish to live, this is what you must do:
ASAKAWA EJECTS THE TAPE AND LEAVES, TAKING THE TAPE WITH HIM.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE METHOD FOR ESCAPING THE VIDEO'S CURSE HAD ALREADY BEEN ERASED, PROBABLY BY ONE OF THE FOUR FRIENDS.


AFTER WATCHING THE TAPE, RYUJI INSTRUCTS ASAKAWA TO MAKE HIM A COPY SO THAT RYUJI CAN STUDY IT FURTHER ON HIS OWN. THE SIMPLE FACT THAT THE VIDEO EXISTS IS PROOF THAT SOMEONE MUST HAVE MADE IT.
THE FIRST THING YOU'VE GOTTA DO IS LET ME SEE THIS TAPE FOR MYSELF.

WHEN HE RETURNS TO TOKYO ASAKAWA CONTACTS HIS FRIEND TAKAYAMA RYUJI, BRINGING HIM UP TO SPEED ON THE EVENT'S SO FAR.


NOR IS ANY EVIDENCE FOUND TO INDICATE ILLEGAL TAMPERING WITH LOCAL TELEVISION SIGNALS
WITH THIS CONCLUSION IN MIND, THE TWO SET OUT TO DETERMINE *WHERE* THE VIDEOTAPE ORIGINATED. THEIR INVESTIGATION FINDS THAT NONE OF THE PERSONS NAMED IN PACIFIC LAND'S GUEST LEDGER BROUGHT THE TAPE WITH THEM.

NOOOOO!
WHY?!
WHY DID YOU WATCH THAT VIDEO?

WELL, YES, BUT... IT'S NOT LIKE SHE COULD UNDERSTAND
YOU'RE NOT SAYING THIS THING IS TRUE!
DID YOUKO WATCH IT TOO?! ALL OF IT?
WHAT ARE YOU SO ANGRY ABOUT?
IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT RYUJI VOICED HIS STARTLING DISCOVERY!
NOW IT WAS NOT JUST HIS OWN LIFE HE HAD TO WORRY ABOUT - ASAKAWA HAD TO FIGHT TO SAVE THE LIVES OF HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER AS WELL.
ONLY IN THE CONCRETE SCENES THAT THE SCREEN GOES DARK, JUST FOR A SECOND, AT REGULAR INTERVALS.
CONCRETE BEING SCENES LIKE WHAT SOMEONE WOULD ACTUALLY SEE IN REAL LIFE. DOING THIS, I NOTICED THAT IT'S
WHAT I'VE DONE IS SEPARATE THE IMAGES ON THE VIDEO TAPE INTO TWO SEPARATE CATEGORIES, "ABSTRACT" AND "CONCRETE."

ASAKAWA, I THINK THAT MOMENTARY BLACKNESS IS SOMEBODY *BLINKING*

BASED ON THIS, THE TWO CONCLUDED THAT THE IMAGES ON THE VIDEOTAPE WERE THE PRODUCT OF NENSHA - THE FOCUSING OF WILL ON FILM OR OTHER MEDIUM TO PRODUCE A PSYCHIC IMAGE- BY SOME AS-YET UNIDENTIFIED INDIVIDUAL.

SHOUMON PLAYING IN THE WATER.

BOUKON. MONSTER.

THE DIALECT WAS IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO THE SASHIKIJI REGION OF OSHIMA ISLAND LOCATED IN IZU PREFECTURE. THUS, THE TWO CONCENTRATED THEIR SEARCH ON THAT REGION, FINALLY TURNING UP THE NAME "YAMAMURA SHIZUKO" AN OSHIMA NATIVE WHOSE PSYCHIC PROWESS HAD AT ONE TIME GIVEN HER A MEASURE OF NOTORIETY

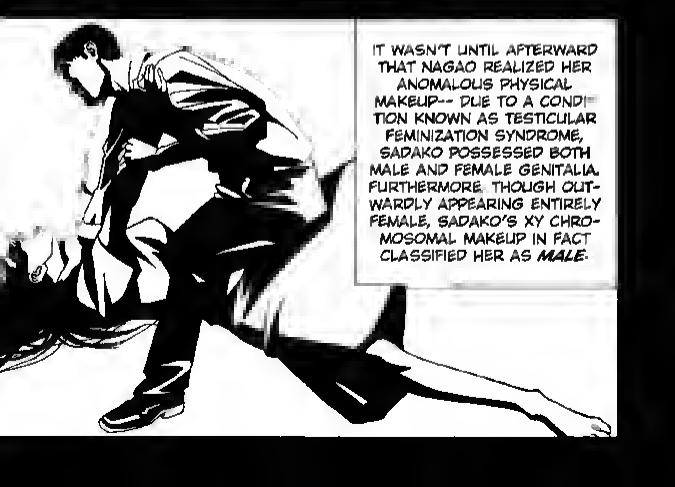
THEY LEARN THAT SHIZUKO HAD ACTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN A PSYCHIC DEMONSTRATION AT THE BEHEST OF ONE IKUMA HEI HACHIRO ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AT T UNIVERSITY
THE TWO SET OUT IMMEDIATELY FOR OSHIMA, INTENT ON LEARNING MORE ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS SHIZUKO
雨
雨
WHEN THE AUDIENCE, A GROUP OF RESPECTED SCHOLARS DECLARED THE DEMONSTRATION TO BE A SHAM, THE PRESS TURNED ON SHIZUKO, DESTROYING HER CREDIBILITY
AS A RESULT IKUMA WAS DRUMMED OUT OF HIS PROFESSION. AS FOR SHIZUKO...

BUT SHIZUKO WAS SURVIVED BY TWO DAUGHTER SHE HAD BORNE WITH PROFESSOR
Yamamura Shizuko commits suicide.
YAMAMURA SADAKO

SHE REMAINED ON OSHIMA ISLAND UNTIL GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, AFTER WHICH SHE MOVED TO TOKYO AND JOINED THE HISHO ACTING TROUPE.
SADAKO POSSESSED POWERS FAR AND ABOVE THOSE OF HER MOTHER.
SHORTLY THERE AFTER, HOWEVER, SADAKO LEFT THE TROUPE, AT WHICH POINT SHE SIMPLY VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE. RYUJI AND ASAKAWA'S INVESTIGATION HAD HIT A DEAD END.
WHY ARE WE WASTING TIME TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER SADAKO'S PAST, WHEN WHAT WE OUGHT TO BE CONCENTRATING ON IS THE TRANSMISSION.
IT WAS, PREDICTABLY, THE KEENLY ANALYTICAL RYUJI FOR WHOM INSPIRATION SUDDENLY STRUCK.

ASAKAWA AND RYUJI DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER BY ENLISTING THE HELP OF ONE NAGAO JOUTAROU, CURRENTLY A PEDIATRICIAN.
AS IT TURNS OUT, THE CABINS STOOD ON THE SITE OF THE OLD SANITORIUM OF SOUTHERN
THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING--THE AREA'S HISTORY.
THE IMAGES FIRST SHOWED UP IN IZU, AT THE RENTAL CABINS. WHY?
AH!
WHOM WAS EMPLOYED AT THE SANITORIUM FROM THE YEARS OF 1962 TO 1967.
X-ray Roo
WITH A SHOCK, BOTH RYUJI AND ASAKAWA REALIZE THAT THEY KNOW THIS MAN - HIS WAS THE FACE THAT APPEARED ON THE VIDEO-TAPE.

THE DOCTOR RELATES HOW HE ENCOUNTERED SADAKO AT THE SANITORIUM, WHERE HE WAS BEING TREATED FOR A SMALLPOX INFECTION. DESIRE FOR HER CONSUMED HIM, UNTIL AT LAST ONE DAY HE FORCED HIMSELF UPON HER, RAPING HER.
AT FIRST PROCLAIMING IGNORANCE, NAGAO FINALLY BUCKLES UNDER RYUJI'S QUESTIONING.

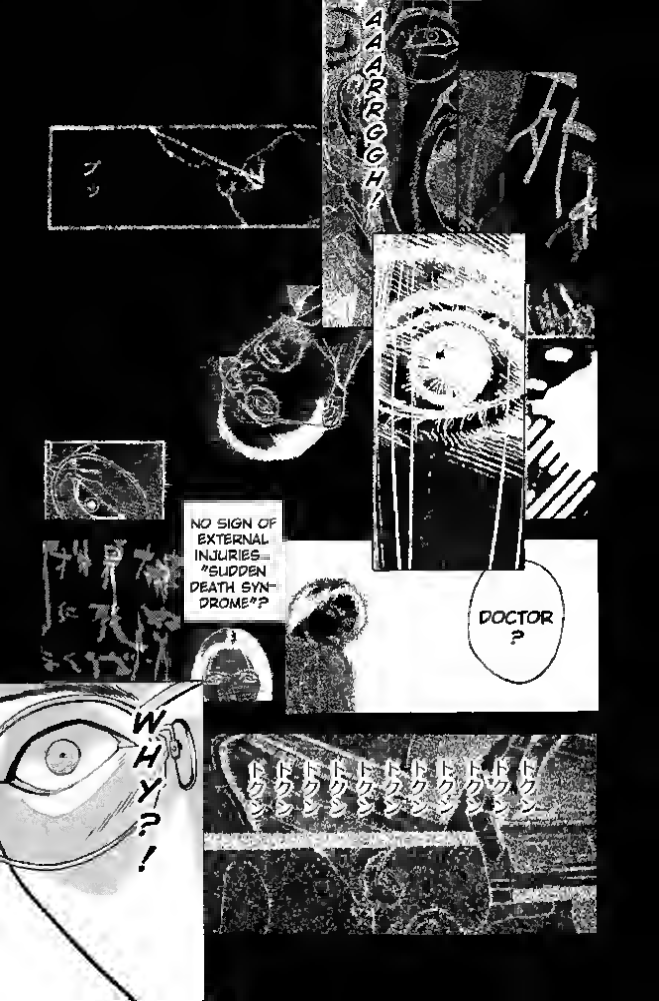

IT WASN'T UNTIL AFTERWARD THAT NAGAO REALIZED HER ANOMALOUS PHYSICAL MAKEUP-- DUE TO A CONDITION KNOWN AS TESTICULAR FEMINIZATION SYNDROME, SADAKO POSSESSED BOTH MALE AND FEMALE GENITALIA. FURTHERMORE, THOUGH OUTWARDLY APPEARING ENTIRELY FEMALE, SADAKO'S XY CHROMOSOMAL MAKEUP IN FACT CLASSIFIED HER AS *MALE*.

SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO BEAR CHIL-DREN
AFTER RAPING HER, [redacted]AO STRANGLED SADAKO AND TOSSED HER BODY INTO A NEARBY WELL.

IF THE CURSE OF THE VIDEOTAPE WAS IN FACT TRUE, ASAKAWA HAD UNTIL 10 P.M.- THE TIME HE VIEWED THE VIDEOTAPE EXACTLY ONE WEEK PREVIOUS- TO FIND THE ANSWER TO ITS LETHAL RIDDLE.
SADAKO MUST STILL BE DOWN THERE...
WHERE ARE YOU?
PLEASE / COME OUT...

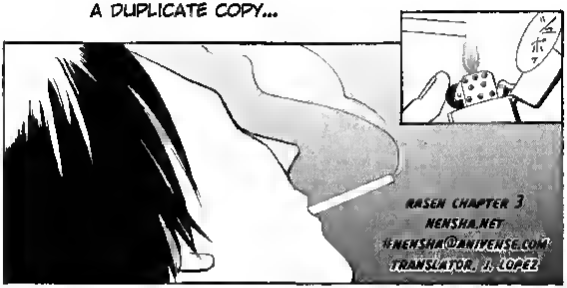
ASAKAWA! IT'S 10 MINUTES PAST 10!

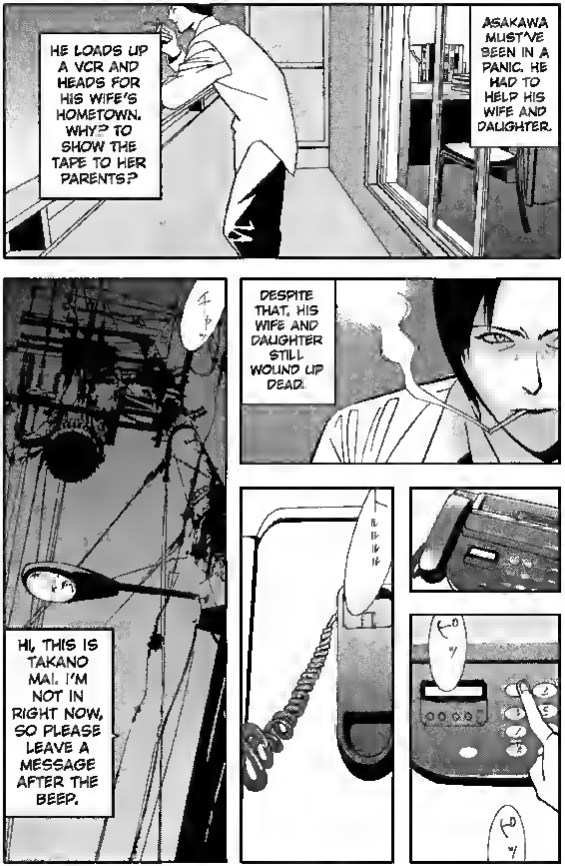
THE ONE WEEK TIME LIMIT HAD PASSED, AND ASAKAWA REMAINED UNHARMED. THE TWO CONCLUDED THAT THEY HAD IN FACT BROKEN THE VIDEO'S CURSE
YOU GET SOME REST. I STILL HAVE A DEADLINE TO MAKE: MY THESIS IS DUE.
WE DID IT!
HOW-EVER ...
ARE YOU SURE THAT RYUJI DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOU? ABOUT A VIDEOTAPE FOR EXAMPLE?


AARRGGH!
ブッ
NO SIGN OF EXTERNAL INJURIES... "SUDDEN DEATH SYNDROME"?
DOCTOR?
WHY?!

BY THE FOLLOWING DAY, TAKAYAMA RYUJI WAS ALREADY DEAD.

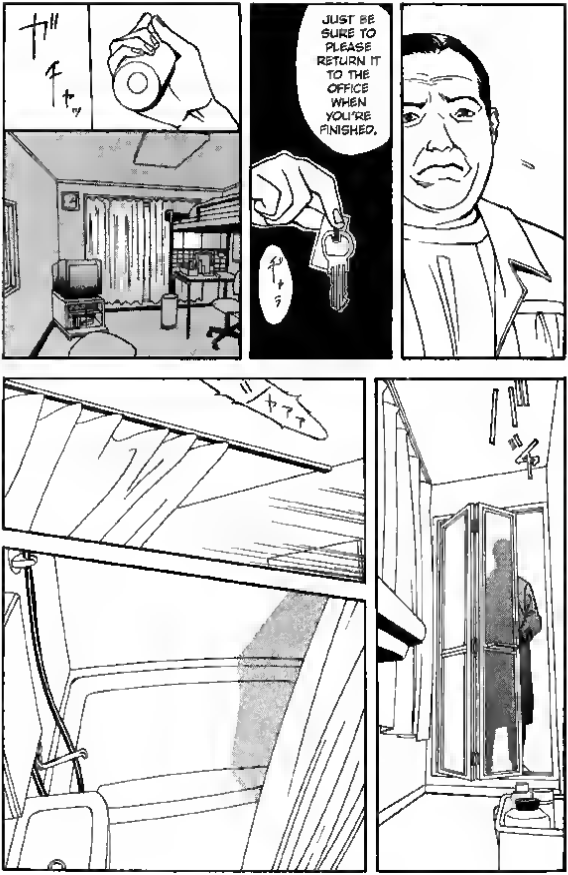
SEPTEMBER 27. MONDAY.
SPECIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE VIRUS: REPLICATION.
THE CURE: MAKE A DUPLICATE COPY OF THE TAPE.



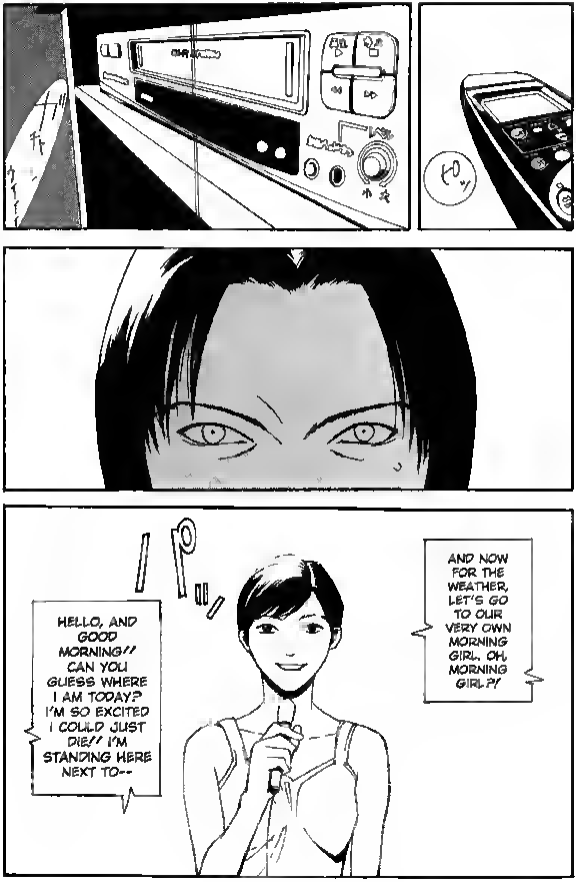

HE LOADS UP A VCR AND HEADS FOR HIS WIFE'S HOMETOWN. WHY? TO SHOW THE TAPE TO HER PARENTS?
ASAKAWA MUST'VE BEEN IN A PANIC. HE HAD TO HELP HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER.
DESPITE THAT, HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER STILL WOUND UP DEAD.
HI, THIS IS TAKANO MAI. I'M NOT IN RIGHT NOW, SO PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP.

HELLO. MY NAME IS ANDOU. I SPOKE WITH YOU YESTERDAY ON THE PHONE...
AAH, YES. MS. TAKANO'S FRIEND. PLEASE, WAIT JUST A MOMENT.

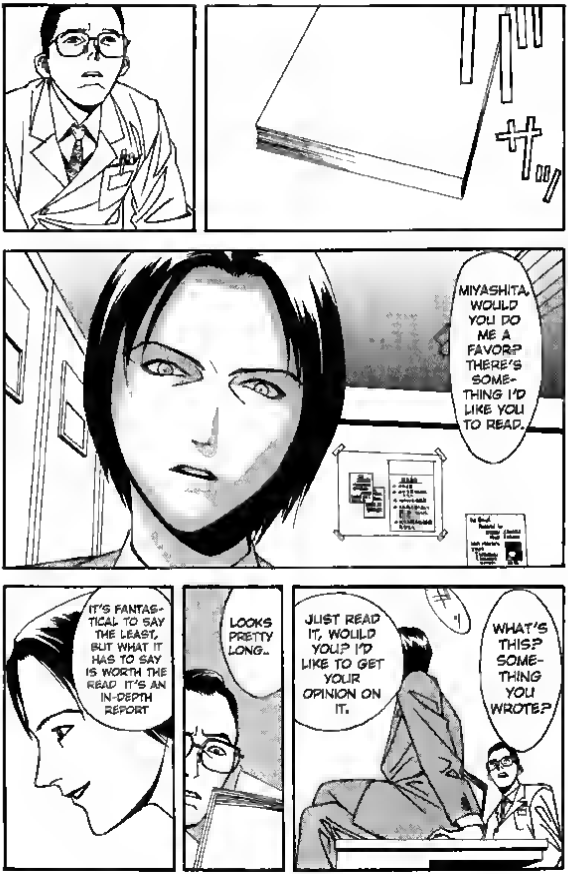
PLEASE.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I'D LIKE TO CHECK FOR MYSELF. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BORROW A SPARE KEY?


JUST BE SURE TO PLEASE RETURN IT TO THE OFFICE WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED.

カラ
NOTHING SEEMS OUT OF PLACE...


HELLO, AND GOOD MORNING!! CAN YOU GUESS WHERE I AM TODAY? I'M SO EXCITED I COULD JUST DIE!! I'M STANDING HERE NEXT TO--
AND NOW FOR THE WEATHER, LET'S GO TO OUR VERY OWN MORNING GIRL. OH, MORNING GIRL?!

AM I MAKING TOO MUCH OUT OF THIS?


MIYASHITA, WOULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR? THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE YOU TO READ.
WHAT'S THIS? SOMETHING YOU WROTE?
JUST READ IT, WOULD YOU? I'D LIKE TO GET YOUR OPINION ON IT.
LOOKS PRETTY LONG..
IT'S FANTASTICAL TO SAY THE LEAST, BUT WHAT IT HAS TO SAY IS WORTH THE READ IT'S AN IN-DEPTH REPORT

ASAKAWA? THE ASAKAWA WHOSE WIFE AND KID.
ON A STRING OF RECENT EVENTS-- WRITTEN BY ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI.
THE SAME.
TAKANO MAI'S GONE MISSING.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU, MIYASHITA. READ IT, AND LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

TAKANO MAI ..YOU MEAN TAKAYAMA RYUJI'S LOVER? THE FIRST ONE TO FIND HIS BODY?
I'VE CALLED THE UNIVERSITY. EVEN GOT IN TOUCH WITH SOME PEOPLE FROM HER HOME TOWN NOTHING.
I WENT OUT TO HER APARTMENT YESTERDAY. SHE'S GOT DAYS WORTH OF MAIL JUST PILED UP IN HER MAILBOX.
I'M STARTING TO GET A REAL BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

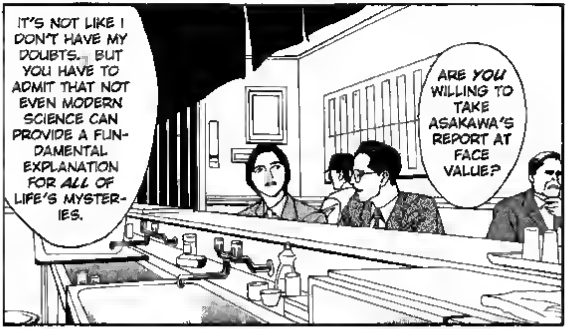
ANDOU, WHY DON'T WE GO GRAB A DRINK? IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE WE'VE DONE ANYTHING.

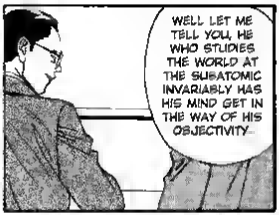
WELL, I'LL TELL YOU, IT DEFINITELY THREW ME FOR A LOOP.
BUT DO YOU BELIEVE IT?

AND? WHAT DID YOU THINK?

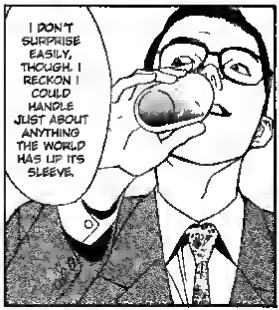
I READ YOUR REPORT.

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANDOU? WE'VE BOTH SEEN THE CORONER'S REPORTS, HEARD THEIR CONCLUSIONS ON THE CAUSE OF DEATH.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT CERTAINLY IS THOROUGH. ALL NAMES AND TIMES OF DEATH MENTIONED IN THE REPORT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE FACTS WE HAVE AT HAND.


IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T HAVE MY DOUBTS... BUT YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT NOT EVEN MODERN SCIENCE CAN PROVIDE A FUNDAMENTAL EXPLANATION FOR *ALL* OF LIFE'S MYSTERIES.
ARE *YOU* WILLING TO TAKE ASAKAWA'S REPORT AT FACE VALUE?

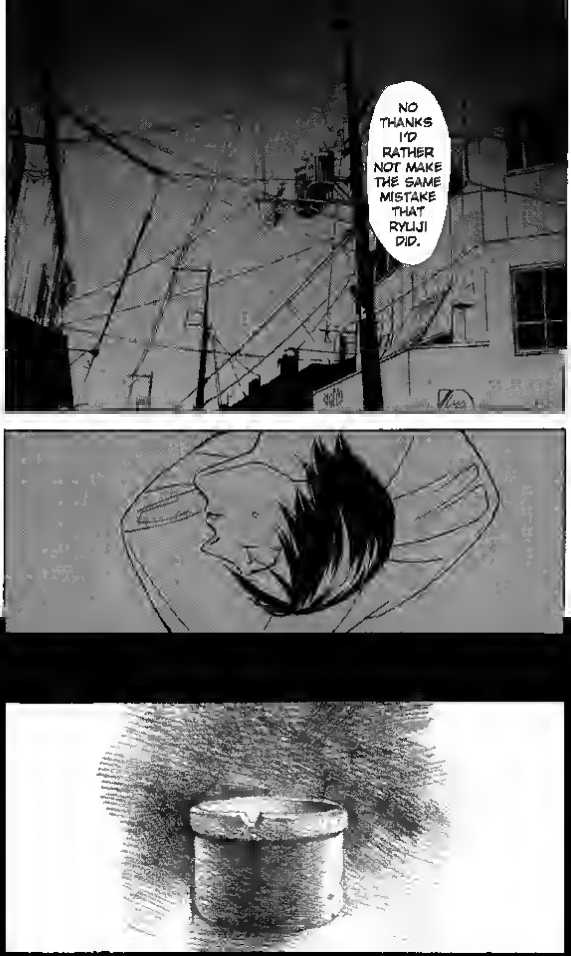

WELL LET ME TELL YOU, HE WHO STUDIES THE WORLD AT THE SUBATOMIC INVARIABLY HAS HIS MIND GET IN THE WAY OF HIS OBJECTIVITY...

THE BLACK AND WHITE ARGUMENT, EH?
LIFE ON OUR PLANET IS EITHER A RANDOM OCCURANCE OR THE PRODUCT OF SOME DIVINE PLAN?


I DON'T SURPRISE EASILY, THOUGH. I RECKON I COULD HANDLE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING THE WORLD HAS UP ITS SLEEVE.

YES. THE DEATH OF ASAKAWA'S WIFE AND KID.
BAH! I MIGHT NOT HAVE EVER TOLD YOU THIS ANDOU, BUT I'M SOMETHING OF AN IDEALIST
THAT'S A BIT EXTREME.
ALL RIGHT THEN MR. IDEALIST. TO GET BACK TO THE QUESTION, IS THERE ANYTHING IN THAT REPORT TO MAKE YOU THINK THAT IT'S NOT ON THE LEVEL?
I CAN'T GET MY HEAD AROUND IT. IF COPYING THE TAPE AND SHOWING TO SOMEONE ELSE IS REALLY WHAT BROKE THE CURSE, THEN WHY DID ASAKAWA'S WIFE AND KID STILL DIE? THE THREE OF THEM WENT BACK TO HIS WIFE'S HOMETOWN
AND SHOWED THE VIDEO TO HER PARENTS, RIGHT? SO THAT SHOULD HAVE SAVED THEM, BUT IT DIDN'T. THE AUTPOSY SAID THAT THEY WERE DEAD EVEN BEFORE THE ACCIDENT. SOMETHING JUST DOESN'T ADD UP.
AAH, YOU TOO, HUH?

IF THE VIDEO DOES EXIST, I'D DEFINITELY WANT TO SEE IT... BUT IF I *WERE* TO WATCH IT, THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT I WOULDN'T END UP DEAD MYSELF.
IT'S A DILEMMA, ALRIGHT.
IT'S A DILEMMA.
WHAT'S THAT?
BUT I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT, ANDOU. I'D LOVE TO GET MY HANDS ON THAT TAPE.
A WEEK'S JUST NOT ENOUGH TIME TO FIGURE THIS THING OUT AND SAVE YOURSELF.
HOW ABOUT YOU? WOULD YOU WATCH IT?


NO THANKS I'D RATHER NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE THAT RYUJI DID.

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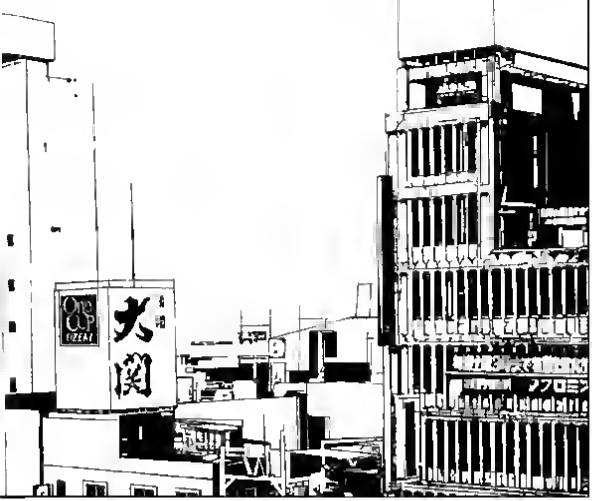
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
ピン
WAS I DREAM-ING?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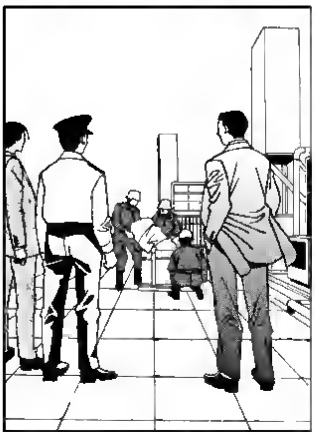
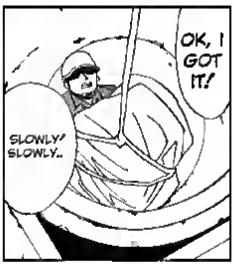
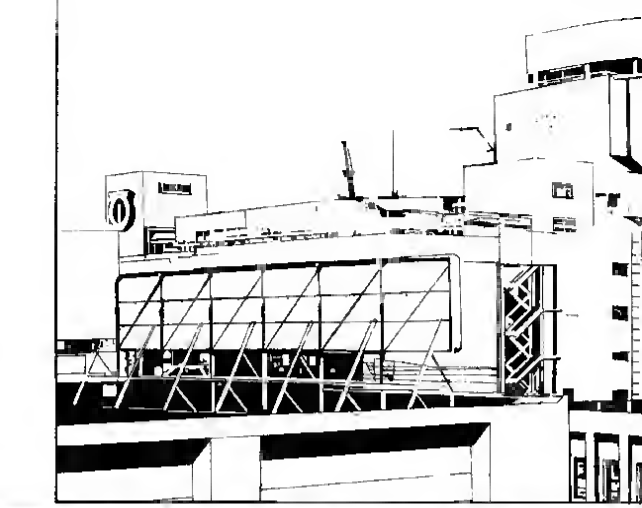
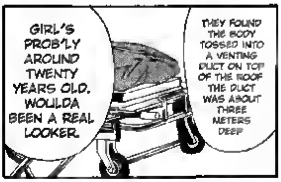
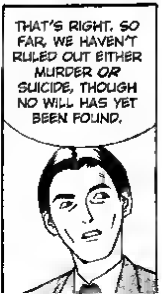



OK, I GOT IT!
SLOWLY SLOWLY..

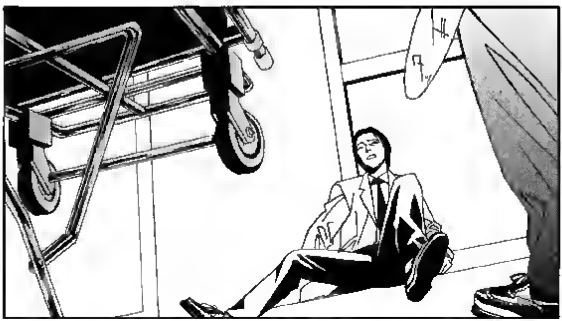


GENTLEMEN. THE BODY WAS DISCOVERED ON A ROOFTOP, IS THAT CORRECT?
WE'VE BROUGHT IN THE JANE DOE, DOCTOR.


GIRL'S PROB'LY AROUND TWENTY YEARS OLD. WOULDA BEEN A REAL LOOKER.
THEY FOUND THE BODY TOSSED INTO A VENTING DUCT ON TOP OF THE ROOF. THE DUCT WAS ABOUT THREE METERS DEEP


THAT'S RIGHT. SO FAR, WE HAVEN'T RULED OUT EITHER MURDER OR SUICIDE, THOUGH NO WILL HAS YET BEEN FOUND.

EXCUSE ME.

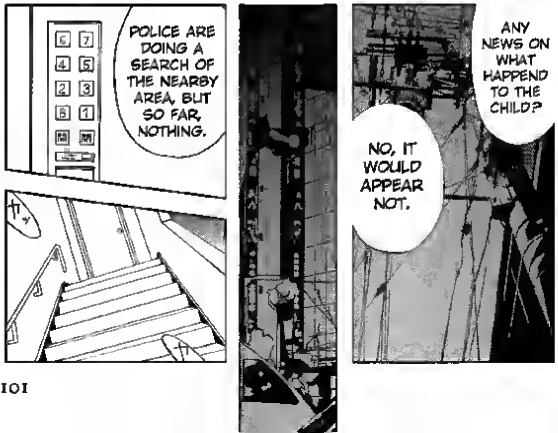


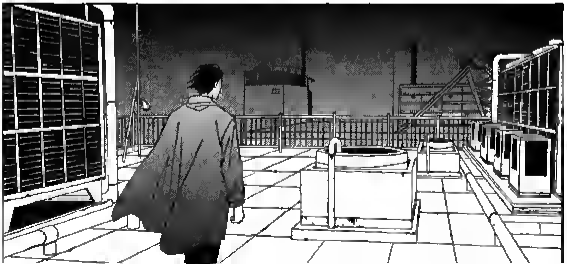
DOCTOR?! ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
WHAT IS IT, DOCTOR? IS IT SOMEONE THAT YOU KNOW?
YOU'RE SURE IT'S HER?
I ONLY MET HER TWICE.
HER NAME WAS TAKANO MAI
PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE PULMONARY ARTERY, AND BE SURE TO GET A TISSUE SAMPLE

TAKANO MAI'S DEATH, AS IT TURNS OUT, WAS NOT THE RESULT OF A HEART ATTACK. WE WON'T KNOW MORE 'TIL WE GET THE RESULTS OF THE TISSUE SAMPLE BACK, BUT A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION REVEALED NO ABNORMALITIES IN THE PULMONARY ARTERY. EXTERNAL INJURIES ARE LIMITED TO A BROKEN RIGHT ANKLE AND LACERATIONS ON BOTH KNEES. POSSIBLY THE RESULT OF FALLING INTO THE VENTING DUCT. PRELIMINARY DIAGNOSIS IS UH... SEVERELY WEAKENED BODILY CONDITION LEADING TO DEATH FROM EXPOSURE.

Autopsy Report

PERFECTLY. HAVE YOU NOT LOOKED AT THE CORONER'S REPORT?
GIVEN BIRTH ...
ARE YOU SURE ?


POLICE ARE DOING A SEARCH OF THE NEARBY AREA, BUT SO FAR, NOTHING.
ANY NEWS ON WHAT HAPPEND TO THE CHILD?
NO, IT WOULD APPEAR NOT.

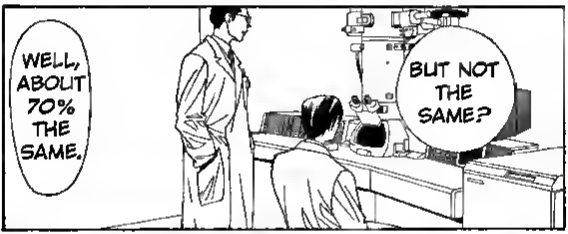


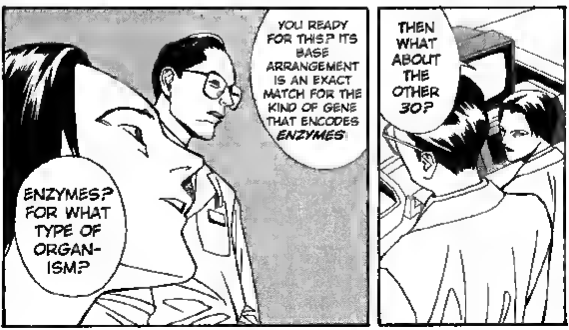
AND IF SHE GAVE BIRTH, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BABY?
TAKANO MAI CAME TO THIS SPOT. BUT WHY? TO DO WHAT?
MAI. HELP ME TO UNDER-STAND ...
1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6

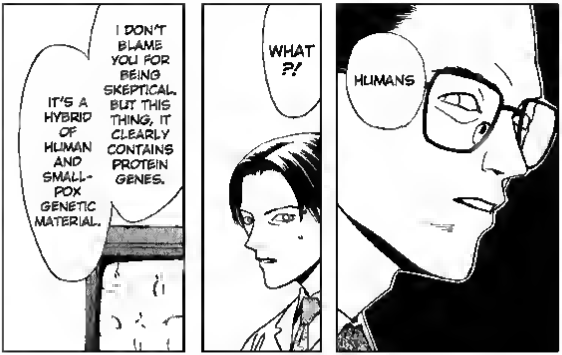
RASEN - CHAPTER 4
KENSHA.NET
#KENSHA@ANIVERSE.C
TRANSLATOR: J. LOPEZ

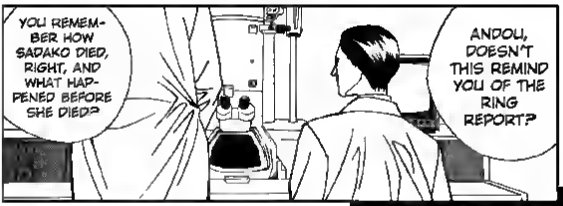
JESUS. IT'S SQUIRMING.
GOOD. STOP.
RAISE THE MAGNIFICATION A BIT MORE.
TAKE IT TO X21,000.
WHAT IT IS, IS A VIRUS THE LIKES OF WHICH WE'VE NEVER SEEN.
ONE THING IN OUR FAVOR, AT LEAST, IS THAT COMMUNICABILITY APPEARS EXTREMELY LIMITED... FOR THE MOMENT.
SONY

I RAN THIS THING THROUGH THE DNA SEQUENCER, AND CAME UP WITH AN ANALYSIS OF ITS BASE ARRANGEMENT. GENETICALLY SPEAKING, IT IS VERY SIMILAR TO SMALLPOX.
YOU'VE GOTTA HAND IT TO OLD SEKI, THOUGH-- HE WAS THE FIRST TO MAKE THE CONNECTION TO SMALL-POX.

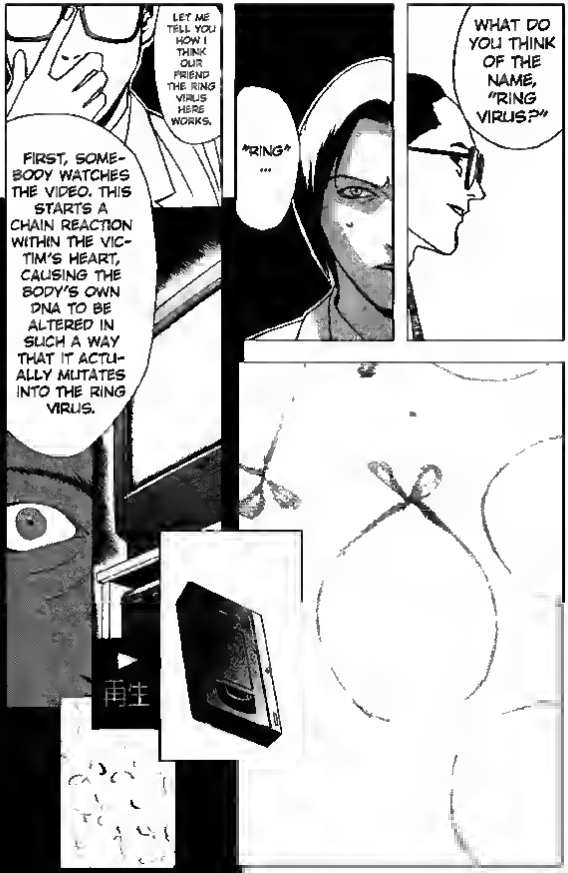

WELL, ABOUT 70% THE SAME.
BUT NOT THE SAME?


YOU READY FOR THIS? ITS BASE ARRANGEMENT IS AN EXACT MATCH FOR THE KIND OF GENE THAT ENCODES ENZYMES.
ENZYMES? FOR WHAT TYPE OF ORGAN-ISM?
THEN WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER 30?

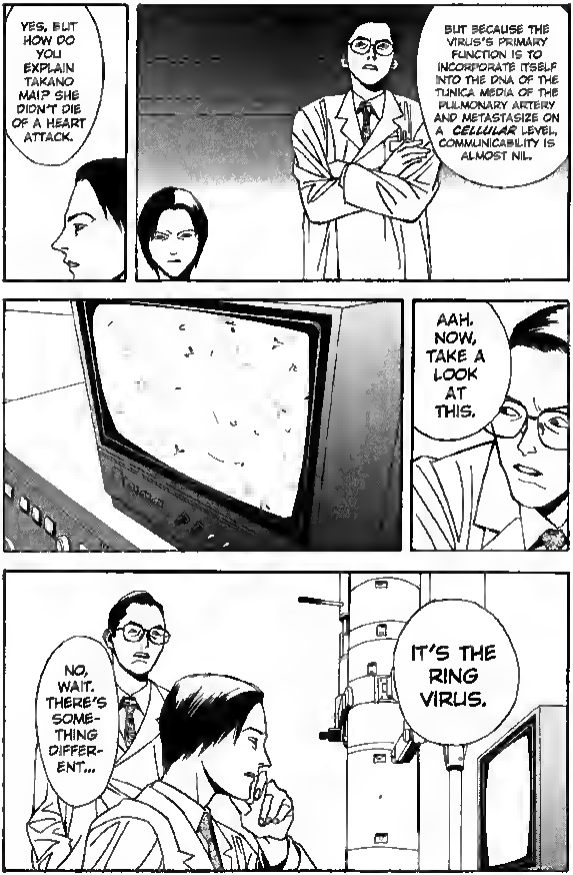

I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR BEING SKEPTICAL. BUT THIS THING, IT CLEARLY CONTAINS PROTEIN GENES.
IT'S A HYBRID OF HUMAN AND SMALL-POX GENETIC MATERIAL.
WHAT?!
HUMANS


YOU REMEMBER HOW SADAKO DIED, RIGHT, AND WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE SHE DIED?
ANDOU, DOESN'T THIS REMIND YOU OF THE RING REPORT?

NAGAO JOUTAROU WAS THE LAST-KNOWN PATIENT IN JAPAN TO BE TREATED FOR SMALLPOX.

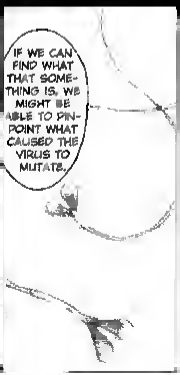

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NAME, "RING VIRUS?"
"RING"
...
LET ME TELL YOU HOW I THINK OUR FRIEND THE RING VIRUS HERE WORKS.
FIRST, SOMEBODY WATCHES THE VIDEO. THIS STARTS A CHAIN REACTION WITHIN THE VICTIM'S HEART, CAUSING THE BODY'S OWN DNA TO BE ALTERED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT ACTUALLY MUTATES INTO THE RING VIRUS.
再生

THE VIRUS THEN SURROUNDS THE HEART, CAUSING A CANCEROUS GROWTH TO FORM IN THE VICTIM'S PULMONARY ARTERY.
IN EXACTLY ONE WEEK, THE GROWTH HAS BECOME LARGE ENOUGH TO COMPLETELY BLOCK THE ARTERY, HALTING BLOOD FLOW AND CAUSING THE HEART TO CEASE PUMPING.
THE VICTIM DIES.

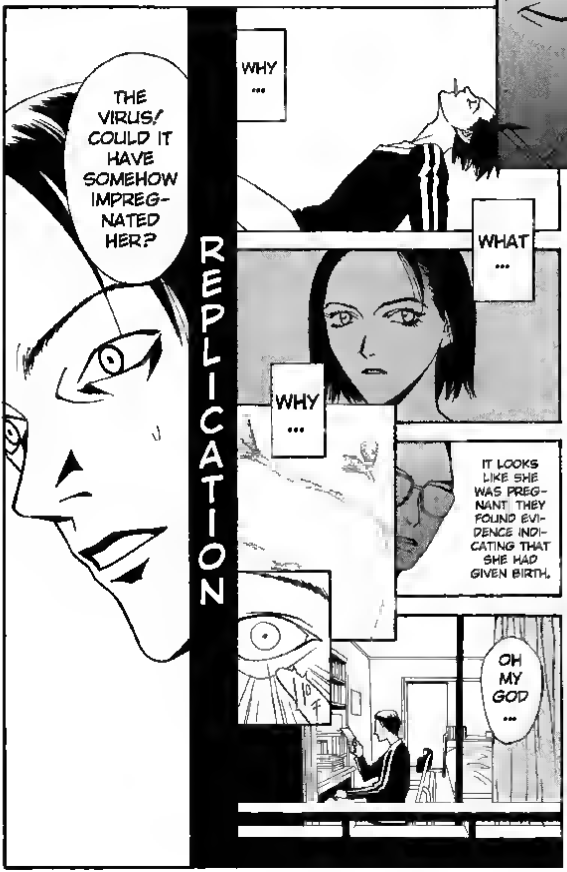

YES, BUT HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN TAKANO MAI? SHE DIDN'T DIE OF A HEART ATTACK.
BUT BECAUSE THE VIRUS'S PRIMARY FUNCTION IS TO INCORPORATE ITSELF INTO THE DNA OF THE TUNICA MEDIA OF THE PULMONARY ARTERY AND METASTASIZE ON A CELLULAR LEVEL, COMMUNICABILITY IS ALMOST NIL.
AAH. NOW, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
IT'S THE RING VIRUS.
NO, WAIT. THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT...

MAI WAS INFECTED BY THE VIRUS, YES,
EXACTLY. IT'S MUTATED BY WAY OF CONNECTION, THIS SAMPLE WAS TAKEN FROM TAKANO MAI
THIS MEANS THAT WE NOW HAVE TWO PEOPLE WHOSE DEATHS WERE NOT DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE VIRUS:
NOR THE VIRUS ITSELF THAT KILLED HER.
BUT IT WAS NEITHER THE TAPE

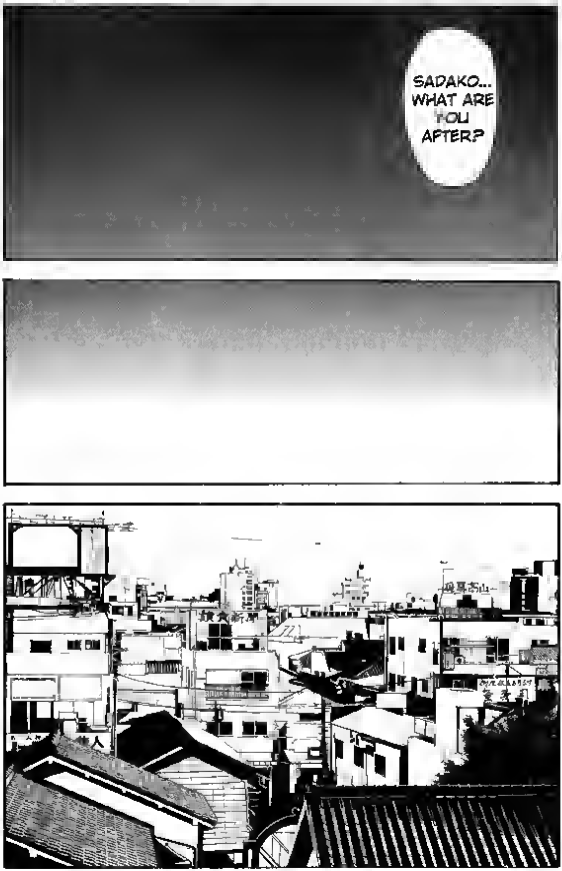
TAKANO MAI AND ASAKAWA KAZUYUKI.



WHY WAS MAI'S HEART FREE OF THE CANCER THAT TARGETED THE OTHER VICTIMS?
THIS VIRUS... IT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING.
SOMETHING...


REPLICATION
THE VIRUS! COULD IT HAVE SOMEHOW IMPREGNATED HER?
WHY ...
WHAT ...
WHY ...
IT LOOKS LIKE SHE WAS PREGNANT. THEY FOUND EVIDENCE INDICATING THAT SHE HAD GIVEN BIRTH.
OH MY GOD ...

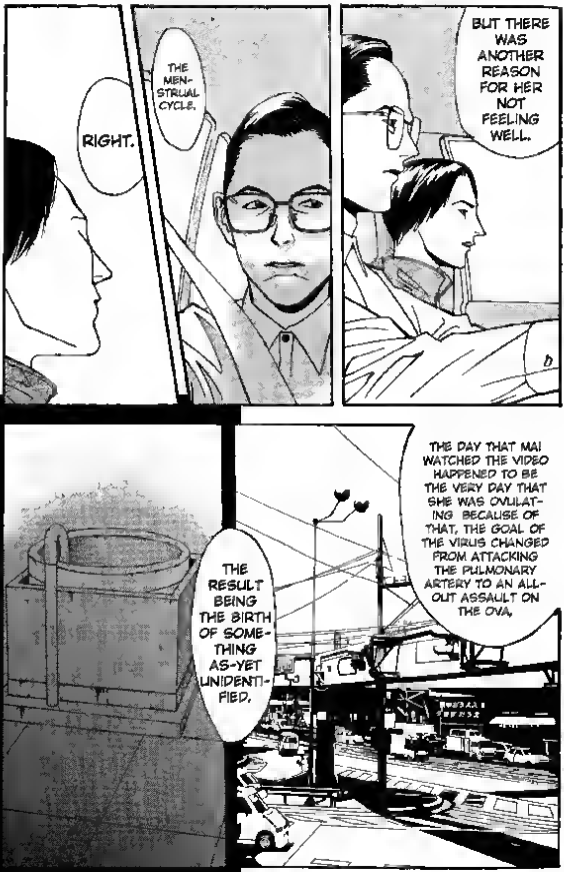
BUT WHAT ABOUT ASAKAWA?
MAI GIVES BIRTH TO THE VIRUS'S "CHILD," THUS CONTRIBUTING TO ITS REPLICATION.
Ring
HE'S A GUY, FOR GOD'S SAKE.


SADAKO... WHAT ARE YOU AFTER?

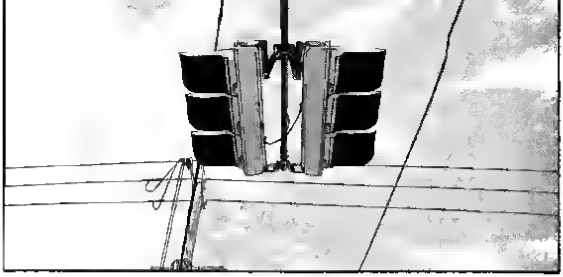
SORRY AGAIN TO CALL YOU UP ON YOUR DAY OFF...
YOU'RE DOING ME A FAVOR. I DON'T USUALLY HAVE A CHANCE TO GET TOGETHER
FIRST, I WANTED TO RUN SOMETHING BY YOU REAL QUICK, ABOUT THAT VIRUS WE SAW YESTERDAY.
WITH ANYONE LIKE THIS. WHERE DID YOU SAY YOU WANTED TO GO?

DID YOU THINK ?
I THOUGHT THE SAME THING
THE WAY IT MOVED AROUND, I THOUGHT IT LOOKED LIKE SPERMATOZOA.
THAT MAYBE IT... LOOKED LIKE SOMETHING YOU'D SEEN BEFORE

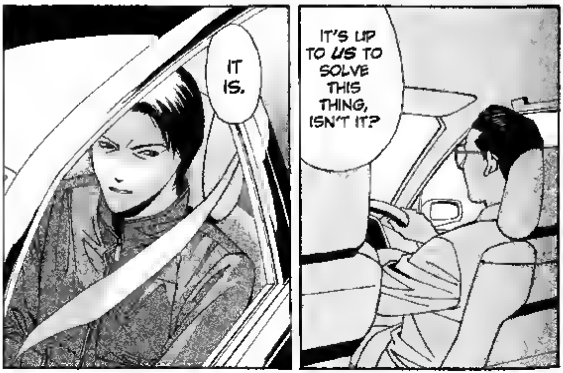
I THOUGHT ABOUT THE FIRST DAY WE MET AND REMEMBERED THINKING THAT SHE DIDN'T LOOK WELL, WHICH AT THE TIME I ATTRIBUTED TO SHOCK FROM RYUJI'S DEATH.
AND WITH THAT IN MIND I THOUGHT ABOUT WHY, IN ALL THE OTHER PATIENTS EXCEPT FOR MAI, WE FOUND EVIDENCE OF CANCER.

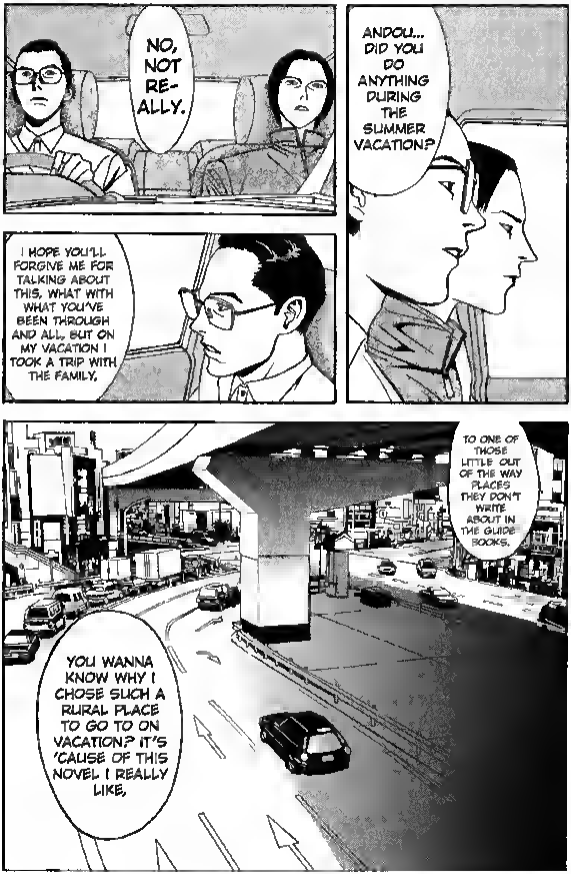

RIGHT.
THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE.
BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER REASON FOR HER NOT FEELING WELL.
THE DAY THAT MAI WATCHED THE VIDEO HAPPENED TO BE THE VERY DAY THAT SHE WAS OVULATING. BECAUSE OF THAT, THE GOAL OF THE VIRUS CHANGED FROM ATTACKING THE PULMONARY ARTERY TO AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON THE OVA.
THE RESULT BEING THE BIRTH OF SOMETHING AS-YET UNIDENTIFIED.

JUDGING FROM THE ESTIMATED TIME OF DEATH,
WHATEVER IT WAS THAT THE VIRUS SPAWNED INSIDE HER WAS ONLY THERE FOR A WEEK.
AND WHAT ABOUT ASAKAWA?
WELL, WHAT IF THE VIRUS MUTATED INSIDE HIM LIKE IT DID WITH MAI, BUT BECAUSE ASAKAWA WAS A MAN, THE VIRUS HAD TO SEEK SOME OTHER FORM OF EXIT?
"SOME OTHER FORM ?"



SO THAT THE VIRUS COULD THRIVE--
SO THAT IT COULD SPREAD.


IT IS.
IT'S UP TO US TO SOLVE THIS THING, ISN'T IT?


NO, NOT RE-ALLY.
ANDOU... DID YOU DO ANYTHING DURING THE SUMMER VACATION?
I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE ME FOR TALKING ABOUT THIS, WHAT WITH WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH AND ALL, BUT ON MY VACATION I TOOK A TRIP WITH THE FAMILY.
TO ONE OF THOSE LITTLE OUT OF THE WAY PLACES THEY DON'T WRITE ABOUT IN THE GUIDE BOOKS.
YOU WANNA KNOW WHY I CHOSE SUCH A RURAL PLACE TO GO TO ON VACATION? IT'S 'CAUSE OF THIS NOVEL I REALLY LIKE,

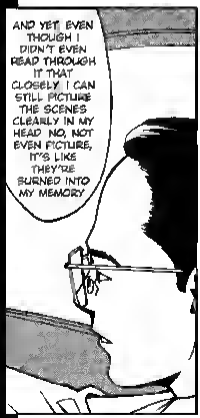
THE BOOK SAID THAT IF YOU LOOK OUT AT THE HORIZON FROM THAT FISHING VILLAGE, YOU'D SEE THIS KILLER MIRAGE. AND I BELIEVED IT.
THAT TAKES PLACE IN A LITTLE FISHING VILLAGE. JUST ONCE, I THOUGHT, I'D LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING LIKE THAT FOR MYSELF. YOU KNOW. SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE...

.....
BUT WHEN I GOT THERE, I DIDN'T SEE ANY MIRAGE ...
YOU EVER VISIT THE SETTING OF A NOVEL?
A COUPLE TIMES ..
AND WHAT DID YOU THINK?
WELL, IT WAS KIND OF LIKE, "THIS IS IT?"
DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU'D IMAGINED, THEN?
MORE LIKE I'D BEEN LIED TO, YOU KNOW?

I'D SAY IT'D BE PRETTY UNUSUAL IF YOU COULD FIND TWO THAT WERE A PERFECT MATCH.
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING THEN, IS THAT THE REALITY OF A SCENERY IS DIFFERENT FROM THE IMPRESSION YOU GET READING ABOUT IT IN A NOVEL?
I READ THAT REPORT JUST ONCE. SKIMMED THROUGH IT, REALLY.
OF COURSE
YOU REMEMBER THE "RING" REPORT PRETTY WELL?

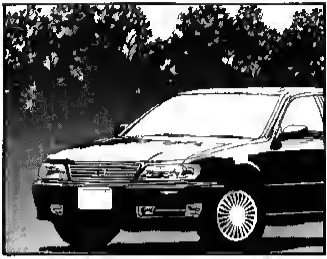
I EVEN DREAM OF THEM: THE WELL; THE SANITORIUM AT HAKONE; PROFESSOR HEIHACHIRO; YAMAMURA SHIZUKO; NAGAO JOUTARO... YAMAMURA SADAKO....

AND?


AND YET, EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T EVEN READ THROUGH IT THAT CLOSELY, I CAN STILL PICTURE THE SCENES CLEARLY IN MY HEAD. NO, NOT EVEN PICTURE, IT'S LIKE THEY'RE BURNED INTO MY MEMORY

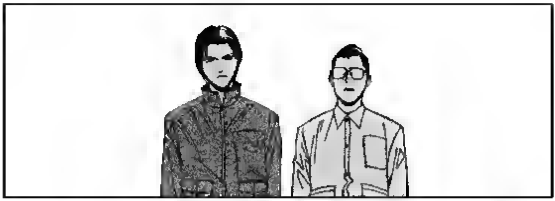
RIGHT DOWN TO THE CHUNK MISSING OUT OF ONE SIDE OF THE WELL.
THE SAME DREAMS OVER AND OVER, LIKE IMAGES LOOPED ON A VIDEOTAPE.
AND I CAN VISUALIZE EVERYTHING SO CLEARLY,
WEIRD, HUH? THE REPORT DIDN'T MENTION ANYTHING ABOUT CHUNKS MISSING OUT OF THE WELL, BUT...
WHAT?!

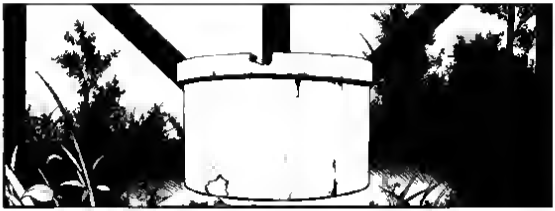
I'VE HAD THE SAME DREAM.
THIS'LL BE YOUR FIRST TIME OUT TO HAKONE PACIFIC LAND, RIGHT?
OF COURSE, YOU?
LET'S CHECK THIS PLACE OUT FOR OURSELVES, ANDOU. AND IF WHAT WE SEE MATCHES WHAT BOTH YOU AND I HAVE IMAGINED..
I'D NEVER EVEN HEARD OF IT BEFORE ASA-KAWA'S REPORT.

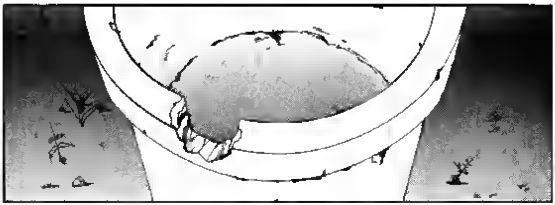


Southern
Hakone
Pacific
Land

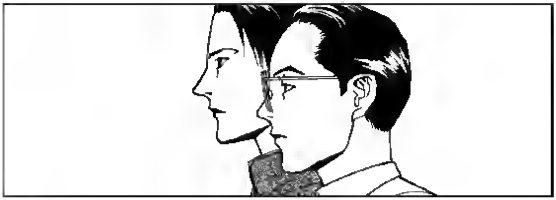
I'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH. I'M STUNNED.
IT'S EXACTLY HOW I'D PICTURED IT.
YOU GETTING A SENSE OF DEJA VU, ANDOU?
I WAS ABOUT TO ASK THE SAME THING.
I'M FIXING TO SAY SOMETHING PRETTY CRAZY HERE, ANDOU.
GO AHEAD.
WHAT IF JUST READING
THAT REPORT WAS ENOUGH TO GET US INFECTED?

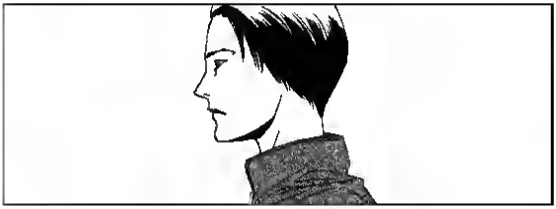


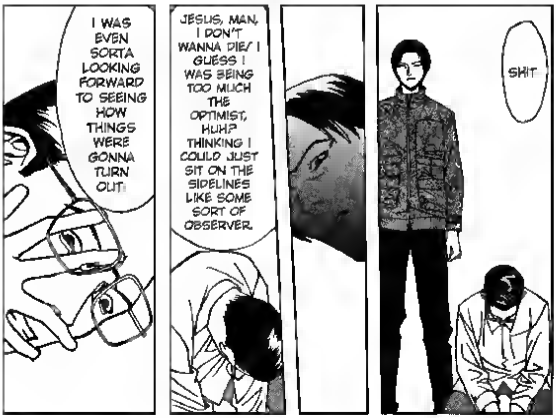


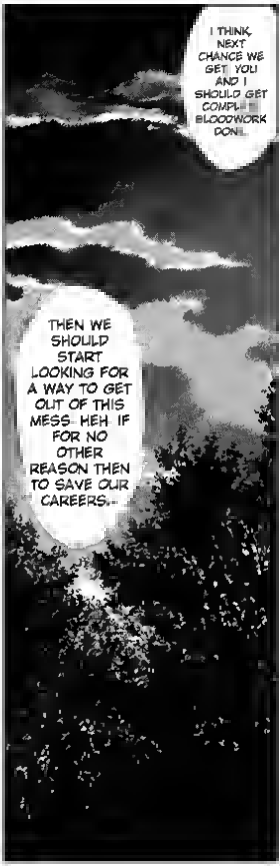


ANDOU, WOULD YOU SAY I'VE GOT A PRETTY WIFE?
YEAH.
AND A CUTE KID?
UH-HUH
AND THAT I'M JUST AN ORDINARY-LOOKING GUY WITH GLASSES?
YOU *ARE* AN ORDINARY-LOOKING GUY WITH GLASSES.
SO, I'D HAVE TO BE PRETTY LUCKY TO HAVE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WIFE WHO'S ALSO A GREAT PERSON.
I'D SAY SO, YES.

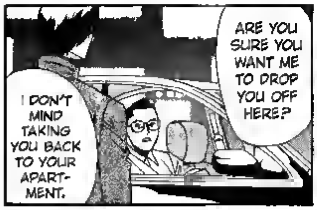


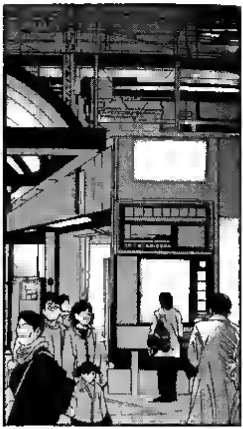



I WAS EVEN SORTA LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW THINGS WERE GONNA TURN OUT!
JESUS, MAN, I DON'T WANNA DIE! I GUESS I WAS BEING TOO MUCH THE OPTIMIST, HUH? THINKING I COULD JUST SIT ON THE SIDELINES LIKE SOME SORT OF OBSERVER.
SHIT


I THINK, NEXT CHANCE WE GET, YOU AND I SHOULD GET COMPLETE BLOODWORK DONE.
THEN WE SHOULD START LOOKING FOR A WAY TO GET OUT OF THIS MESS. HEH. IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THEN TO SAVE OUR CAREERS.

YEAH. ME, TOO.


I DON'T MIND TAKING YOU BACK TO YOUR APART-MENT.
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT ME TO DROP YOU OFF HERE?

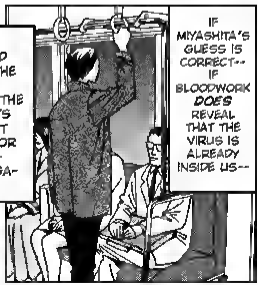


YOU SHOULD GET BACK BEFORE YOUR FAMILY STARTS WORRYING ABOUT YOU.
BUT THEN YOU'D HAVE TO COME ALL THE WAY BACK TO GET TO YOUR PLACE. I'M FINE TAKING THE TRAIN.

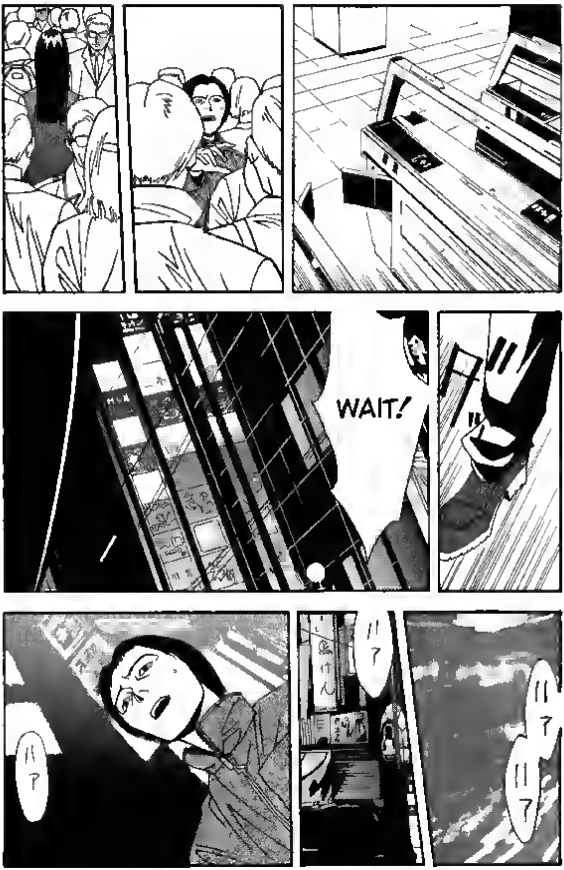
OK.

.....
YEAH ... I'LL CALL YOU, OK?

THAT WOULD MAKE THE RING REPORT THE VIRUS'S LATEST TOOL FOR SELF-PROPAGATION.


IF MIYASHITA'S GUESS IS CORRECT-- IF BLOODWORK *DOES* REVEAL THAT THE VIRUS IS ALREADY INSIDE US--

3
THAT GIRL!


WAIT!
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LOST HER...
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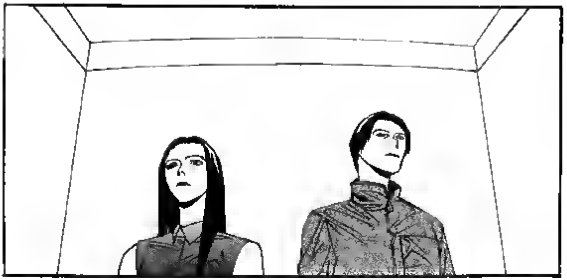

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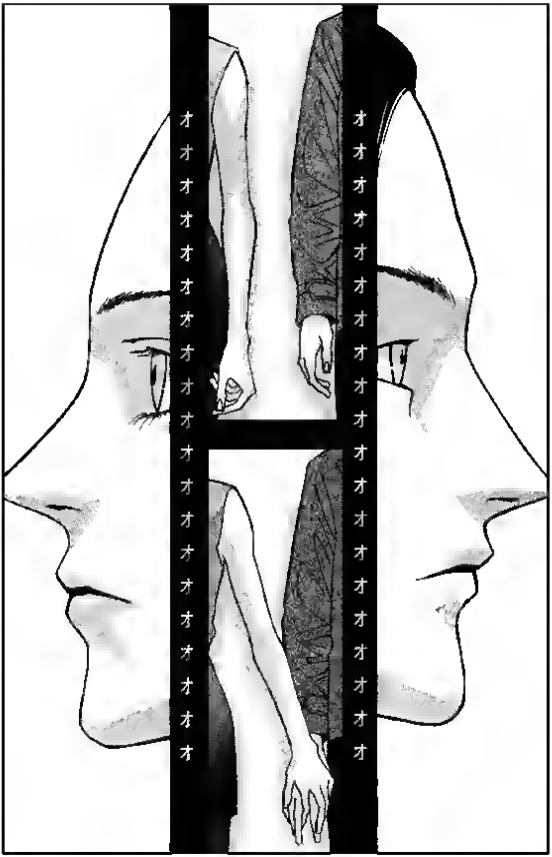
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RASEN CHAPTER 5
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TRANSLATOR: J. LOPEZ
EDITOR: MINARU

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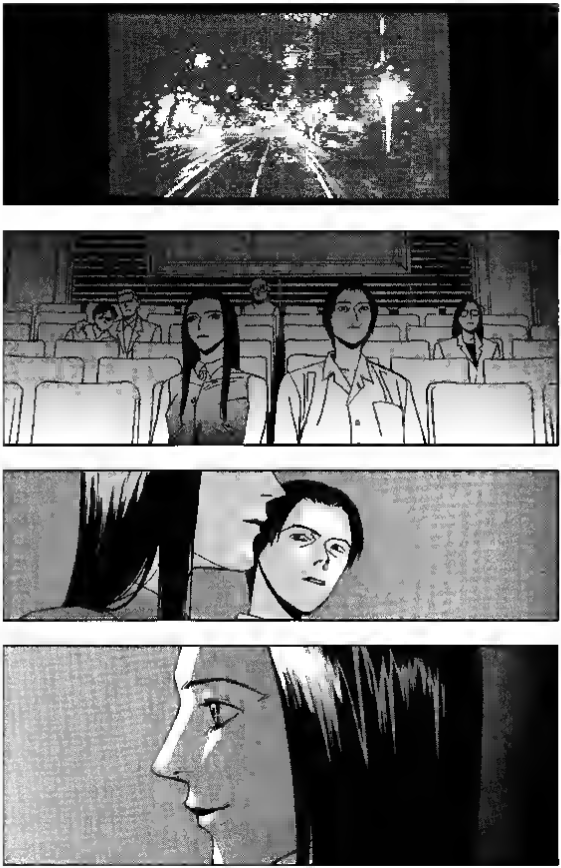
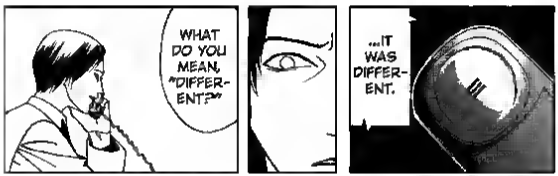
I CAN'T BELIEVE I DIDN'T EVEN ASK YOUR NAME...
WHY DON'T WE GO SEE A MOVIE?
I'D LIKE TO GO SEE A MOVIE.
GOOD MORN-ING.

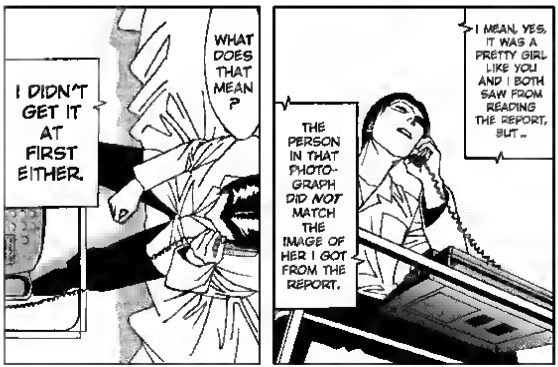


ANDOU! WHERE THE HELL'VE YOU BEEN ALL MORNING? I'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH YOU FOR HOURS.
HELLO?
BR RR RR IR MM ME.
WHAT? YOU WENT TO GO SEE A MOVIE?!
YEAH, I WAS AT THE MOVIES.
WELL, I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE TAKING THINGS IN STRIDE, MR. I-DON'T-HAVE-A-CARE-IN-THE-WORLD! ANYWAY, I'VE GOT SOME INFO FOR YOU. YOU KNOW WHERE I'VE BEEN TODAY?
THREE, ACTUALLY.

DON'T GET AHEAD OF YOURSELF THERE, PUNCHY. UNLIKE YOU, I WAS OUT DOING SOME LEGWORK.
AND YOU SAY I DON'T HAVE A CARE IN THE--
TO THE THE-ATER.
THE THE-ATER?
CHECKING UP ON SOMETHING PRETTY IMPORTANT, ACTUALLY. YAMAMURA SADAKO.
TO BE MORE SPE-CIFIC, TRYING TO FIND OUT
HER PHOTO!
BINGO.
WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE
WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE? YOU DO REALIZE SHE'S DEAD, DON'T YOU? HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY "CHECK UP ON" ...
WHEN SADAKO JOINED THE ACTING TROUPE, THEY PUT A PHOTO OF HER ALONG WITH ALL THE OTHER INFOR-MATION IN HER FILE. THAT WAS SOMETHING WE NEVER
THOUGHT TO QUESTION. EH, WHAT SADAKO LOOKED LIKE. BUT WHEN I SAW THAT PICTURE OF HER FROM THE ACTING TROUPE...

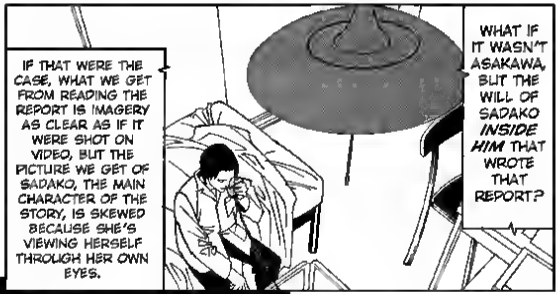
WHAT?
YOU SAW IT, RIGHT? AND?

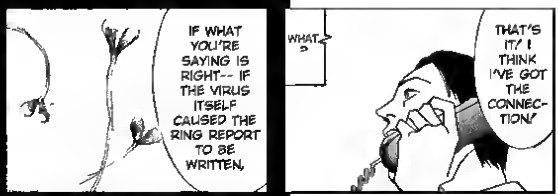

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "DIFFERENT?"
...IT WAS DIFFERENT.


I DIDN'T GET IT AT FIRST EITHER.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
THE PERSON IN THAT PHOTOGRAPH DID NOT MATCH THE IMAGE OF HER I GOT FROM THE REPORT.
I MEAN, YES, IT WAS A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU AND I BOTH SAW FROM READING THE REPORT, BUT...

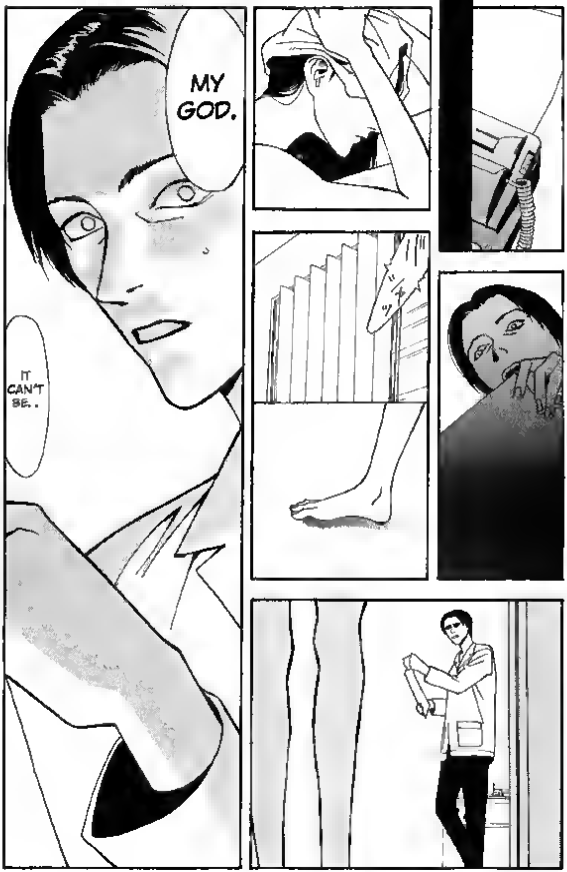
I ASKED HIM ONCE, WHAT KIND OF FACE WAS THE HARDEST FOR HIM TO DRAW. HE TOLD ME THAT SINCE EACH FACE HAS ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE QUALITIES, REPRODUCING *ANY* FACE IS EASY... BUT IF PRESSED FOR AN ANSWER,
BUT THEN I REMEMBERED SOMETHING A FRIEND OF MINE SAID. THIS GUY WHO'S ALSO AN EXCELLENT SKETCH ARTIST
IT MEANS I'M STARTING TO WONDER IF ASAKAWA WROTE THAT REPORT AT ALL.
YES, BUT WHAT DOES IT *MEAN*?
AN ARTIST HAS OF HIMSELF, THE MORE WHAT HE DRAWS IS LESS LIKELY TO RESEMBLE WHAT HE REALLY LOOKS LIKE.
HE'D HAVE TO SAY THAT HIS *OWN* FACE GAVE HIM THE MOST PROBLEMS. APPARENTLY THE STRONGER A SELF IMAGE

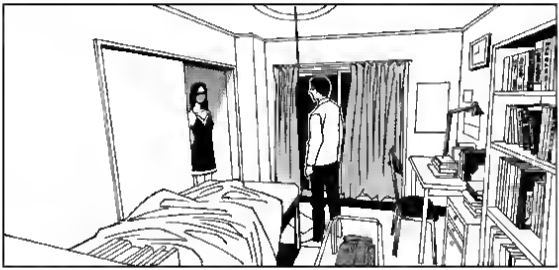
WHAT?


IF THAT WERE THE CASE, WHAT WE GET FROM READING THE REPORT IS IMAGERY AS CLEAR AS IF IT WERE SHOT ON VIDEO, BUT THE PICTURE WE GET OF SADAKO, THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE STORY, IS SKEWED BECAUSE SHE'S VIEWING HERSELF THROUGH HER OWN EYES.
WHAT IF IT WASN'T ASAKAWA, BUT THE WILL OF SADAKO *INSIDE HIM* THAT WROTE THAT REPORT?


IF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS RIGHT-- IF THE VIRUS ITSELF CAUSED THE RING REPORT TO BE WRITTEN,
WHAT...?
THAT'S IT! I THINK I'VE GOT THE CONNEC-TION!

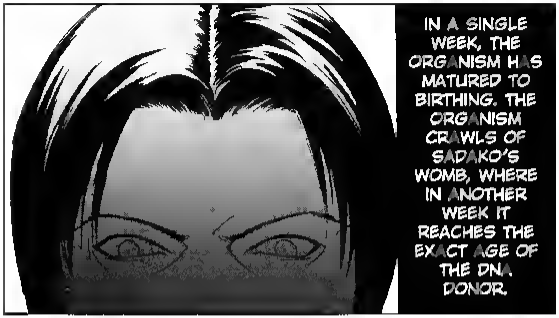
THAT COULD BE IT.
SO EVEN THOUGH ASAKAWA WAS A GUY AND COULDN'T GIVE BIRTH LIKE MAI, HE COULD STILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS BY WRITING THE REPORT!
THEN THE ROLE OF SPREADING THE VIRUS FALLS TO ASAKAWA, THE BEARER OF THE VIRUS.
AND SIMPLY READING THAT REPORT WOULD CAUSE THE READER TO CONTRACT THE VIRUS--
LOOK, LET'S JUST WORRY ABOUT ONE THING AT A TIME. FOR NOW I'LL GO AHEAD AND FAX SADAKO'S PHOTO OVER TO YOU.
AND IF BLOOD-WORM PICKS UP THE VIRUS INSIDE US AS WELL...
OK. I'M HANGING UP NOW.


MY GOD.
IT CAN'T BE..



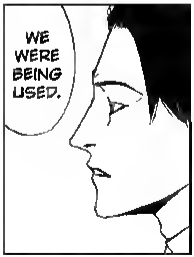
THE EGG, ITS NUCLEUS HAVING BEEN REPLACED, IS RETURNED TO SADA-KO'S WOMB, WHERE THE GROWTH PROCESS BEGINS. MEMORY FOR THE FERTILIZED EGG IS SOMEHOW DRAWN FROM THE GENETIC INFORMATION ENCODED WITHIN THE DNA ITSELF-- A COMPLETE RECORD OF EVENTS UP UNTIL THE TIME OF DEATH FOR THE DONOR OF THE SOURCE DNA.

SADAKO... WITH HER FEMALE *AND* MALE ANATOMY, SHE COULD PRODUCE BOTH SPERM AND EGG AND INCITE FERTILIZATION WITHIN HER OWN BODY. BRINGING THE FERTILIZED EGG TO FRUITION, HOWEVER, WOULD REQUIRE REMOVING THE DNA FROM WITHIN THE EGG AND REPLACING IT WITH THAT OF SOME OUTSIDE SOURCE.


IN A SINGLE WEEK, THE ORGANISM HAS MATURED TO BIRTHING. THE ORGANISM CRAWLS OF SADAKO'S WOMB, WHERE IN ANOTHER WEEK IT REACHES THE EXACT AGE OF THE DNA DONOR.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING THIS WHOLE TIME?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT WITH THIS?

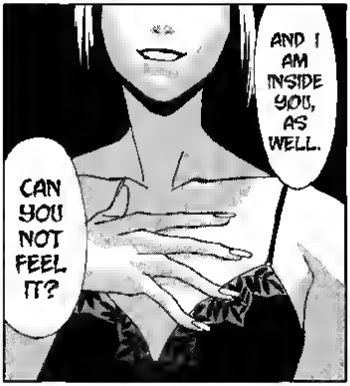

WE WERE BEING USED.

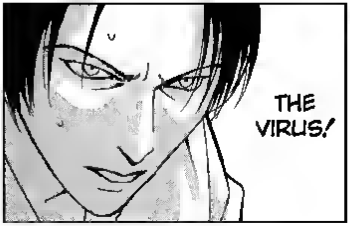
YEAH

YAMA... MURA
SADA-KO!
IT CAN'T BE!
IT IS. I AM SA-DA-KO.
NO! SA-DAKO IS DEAD!
YET HERE I STAND.

FROM TAKANO MAI
WHERE... WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
THE CHILD MAI GAVE BIRTH TO... IT WAS YOU?!
MY GOD!
INFORMATION ONTO VIDEOTAPE, AND THAT WHEN TAKANO MAI VIEWED THIS TAPE, SHE WAS IMPREGNATED BY THAT INFORMATION?
WOULD IT BE SO OUTSIDE THE REALM OF YOUR SCIENTIFIC MIND TO CONSIDER THIS THAT USING MY GIFT OF NENSHU, WHICH SOME CALL PSYCHOGRAPHY, I WAS ABLE TO IMPRINT MY OWN GENETIC
WHICH I HAVE READ WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING.
I DON'T COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF... BUT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PUT MOST OF IT TOGETHER FROM THE BOOKS AND REPORTS YOU SO THOUGHTFULLY STOCK YOUR APARTMENT WITH.
BUT, WHY DID MAI HAVE TO DIE?

MONSTER!
YOU... YOU
MON ...
MY AWARENESS AS YAMAMURA SADAKO WAS BEGUN BEFORE BIRTH.
SO THAT EVEN AS I GREW WITHIN TAKANO MAI'S WOMB SO TOO DID MY AWARENESS OF SELF UNTIL I CAME TO HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER HER BODY.
THINK OF MAI MERELY AS A CHRYSALIS. A SINGLE STAGE FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF MY BIRTH. AFTER THAT BIRTH, HER BODY WAS LITTLE MORE THAN AN EMPTY SHELL... AND I DISPOSED OF IT AS SUCH.


AND I AM INSIDE YOU, AS WELL.
CAN YOU NOT FEEL IT?

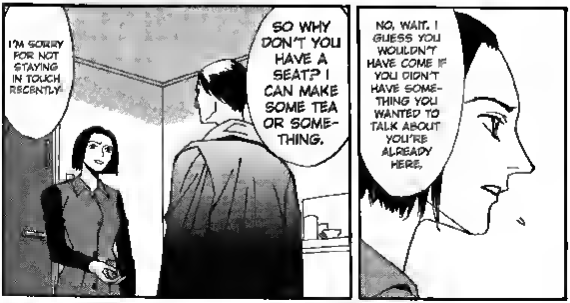

THE VIRUS!

SADAKO, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT?
SHALL I ALONE KNOW
WHAT IT IS TO BE CAST TO THE DEPTHS LEFT ALONE TO ROT. UNKNOWN AN IN OBSCURITY? NO... I WANT ALL OF EXISTENCE
TO KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE YAMAMURA SADAKO.

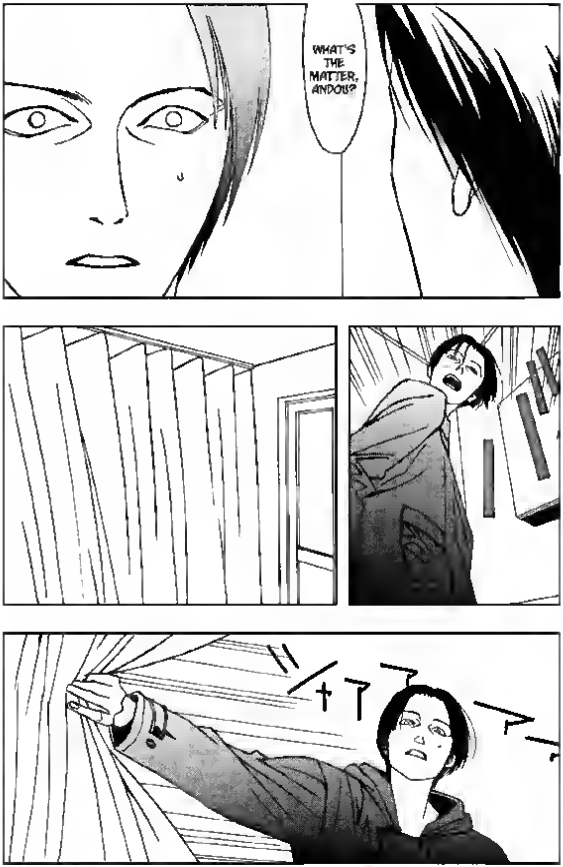
AM I MAKING TOO MUCH OUT OF THIS?

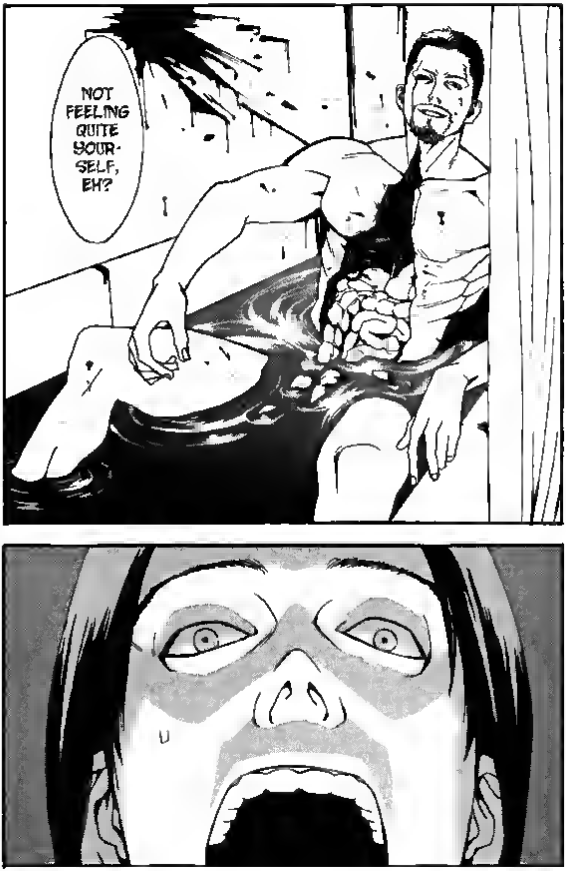
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY HOUSE?!
MR. ANDOU?

I, I REALLY AM SORRY. LOOK, I'M GONNA GO.
I JUST TALKED TO THE LANDLORD DOWNSTAIRS. HE SAID THAT SOMEONE NAMED "ANDOU" HAD COME BY, AND...
IT'S JUST THAT IT'D BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME WITHOUT ANY WORD FROM YOU, AND I BECAME WORRIED
MS. TAKANO? I, UH, HOW CAN I EVEN BEGIN TO EXPLAIN? I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO STARTLE YOU.


I'M SORRY FOR NOT STAYING IN TOUCH RECENTLY.
SO WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A SEAT? I CAN MAKE SOME TEA OR SOMETHING.
NO, WAIT. I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T HAVE COME IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT YOU'RE ALREADY HERE.

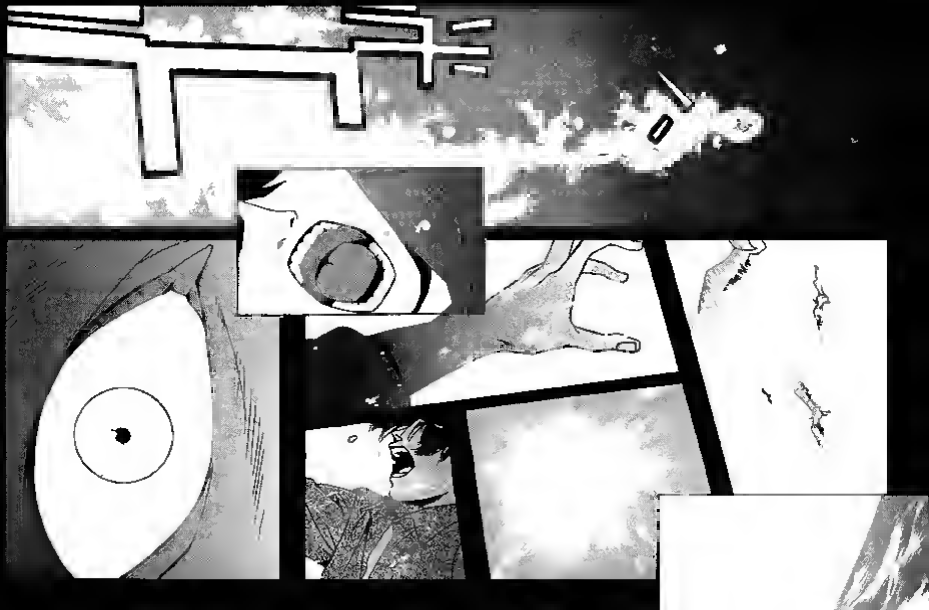
ｽﾞｰ
ｽﾞｰ
AND THERE'S SOME-THING ELSE...
SO FAR, SIX BODIES HAVE TURNED UP EXHIBITING THE SAME SYMPTOMS AS RYUJI.
I'M SORRY, I...?
URGH
ﾊｧ
ﾊｧ


WHAT'S THE MATTER, ANDOU?

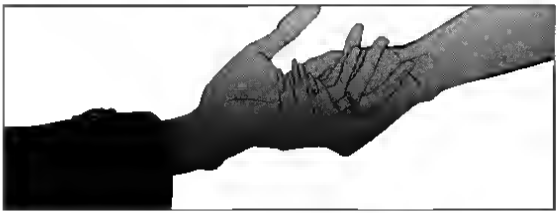

NOT FEELING QUITE YOURSELF, EH?

HEH
HEH
HEH
HA
HA
HA
HA
HEE
HEE
HEE
AARGH!!
HEH
HEH
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA

TA-
TA
KA
NO
RI!

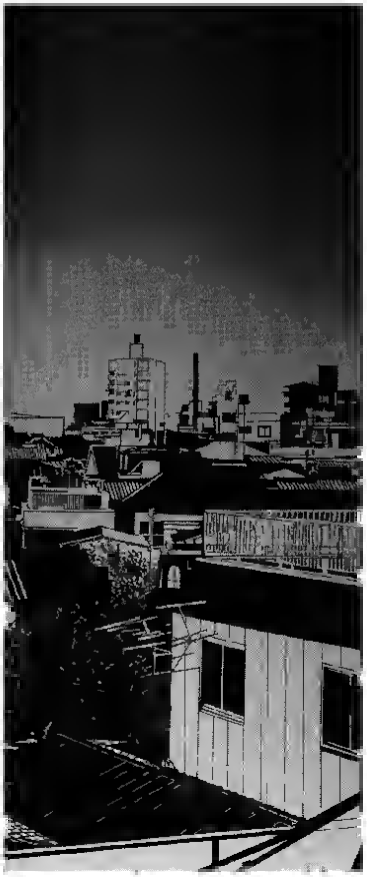


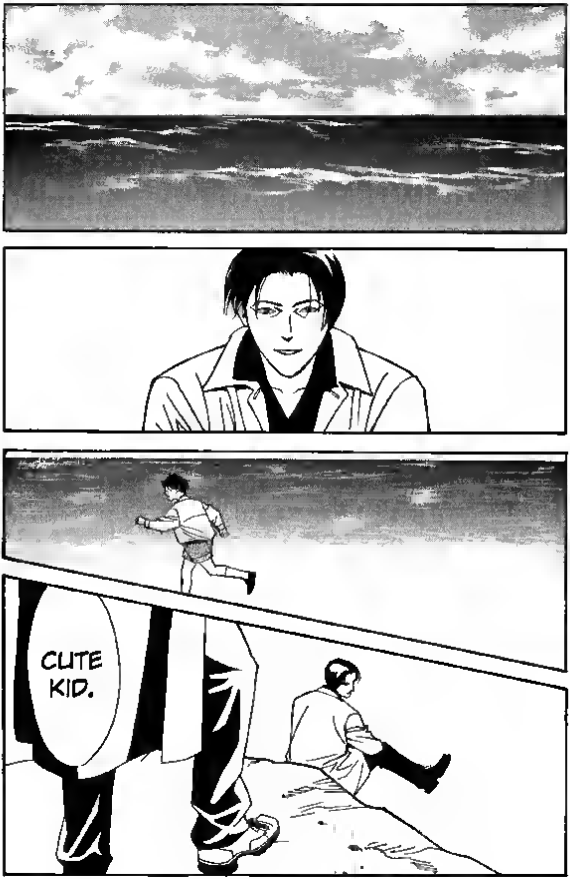
I COULD DO IT, ANDOU. WITH MY BODY.



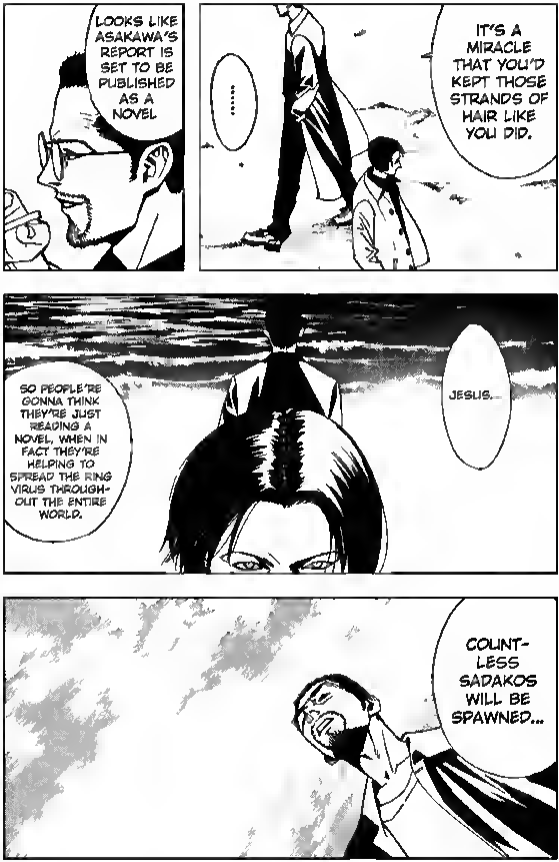
I COULD GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT.

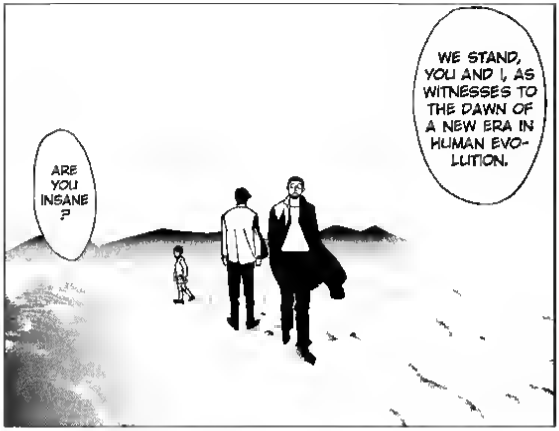
FOR ONE.
TAKA-YAMA RYUJI.
AND WHAT IS IT THAT I WANT?
17 R 13 9
IF NOT FOR HIM, I WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO RETURN. DID YOU NOT EVER THINK WHY, IN THOSE LAST MOMENTS RYUJI CALLED NOT ASAKAWA BUT TAKANO MAI?
WHAT?
RYUJI? ARE YOU THERE?
HE HAS BECOME QUITE INDIS-PENSA-BLE TO ME.
HE HAD TO: OR SHE WOULD NOT HAVE COME TO HIS APARTMENT, WHERE SHE WOULD FIND HIS THESIS--



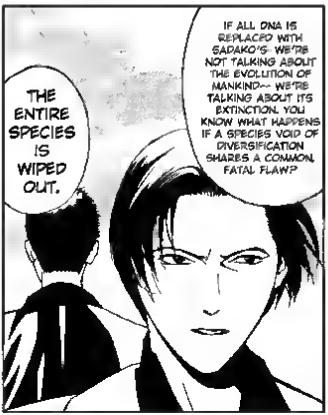

CUTE KID.

RYUJI...
I SUPPOSE YOU'VE GOTTEN EVERYTHING OUT OF THIS ARRANGEMENT THAT YOU WANTED?
AND YOU HAVEN'T?
TRY AND TAKE BETTER CARE OF HIM THIS TIME. HE IS, AFTER ALL, MY BROTHER, IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING
YOU'VE GOT YOUR SON BACK, THANKS TO SADAKO.


LOOKS LIKE ASAKAWA'S REPORT IS SET TO BE PUBLISHED AS A NOVEL
.....
IT'S A MIRACLE THAT YOU'D KEPT THOSE STRANDS OF HAIR LIKE YOU DID.
SO PEOPLE'RE GONNA THINK THEY'RE JUST READING A NOVEL, WHEN IN FACT THEY'RE HELPING TO SPREAD THE RING VIRUS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD.
JESUS...
COUNTLESS SADAKOS WILL BE SPAWNED...


WE STAND, YOU AND I, AS WITNESSES TO THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN HUMAN EVOLUTION.
ARE YOU INSANE?

LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I THINK, MY FRIEND. I THINK THAT MANKIND BROUGHT THIS ON ITSELF, THAT ALL ALONG, IT WAS UNCONSCIOUSLY PRAYING
FOR ITS OWN DESTRUCTION.


IF ALL DNA IS REPLACED WITH SADAKO'S, WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF MANKIND-- WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ITS EXTINCTION. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS IF A SPECIES VOID OF DIVERSIFICATION SHARES A COMMON, FATAL FLAW?
THE ENTIRE SPECIES IS WIPED OUT.

DADDY!
I WON-DER ...
THERE'S NOT A SPECIES ALIVE THAT WISHES FOR ITS OWN DESTRUC-TION!
THERE'S A WHOLE NEW FUTURE AWAITING THAT BOY.
YOUR MOM IS GONNA BE REAL SUR-PRISED WHEN SHE SEES YOU
C'MON, SON. LET'S GO.
'K.

Rasen - The End

Rasen
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